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Long Island

Battle of
Bouvines

Rebel
Ship Stealer

Showdown
Off La Hougue



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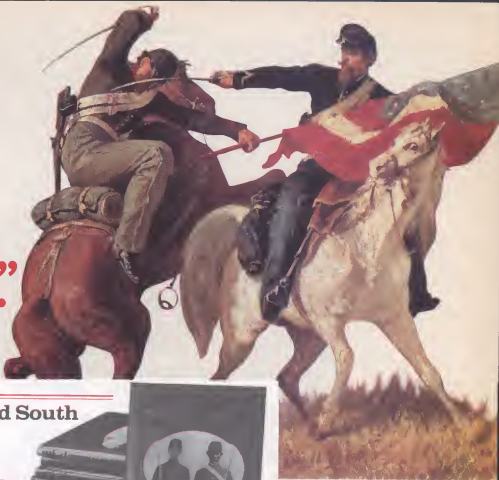
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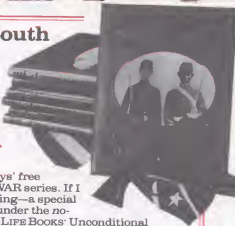
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"I WOULD STRIKE DOWN MY OWN BROTHER."



An Elite Spy
Rose Greenhow
(shown with her
daughter), a prom-
inent Washington
hostess, gathered
intelligence for the
South at high-level
parties.

The nation was caught in a shattering crisis. From Illinois, one brother wrote another in Virginia, "I would strike down my own brother if he dare to raise a hand to destroy the flag." Hot-blooded J.E.B. Stuart resigned from the U.S. Army, renouncing his father-in-law, a Union general. In South Carolina

war broke out; a young Confederate officer returned fire on Fort Sumter and an old friend, his West Point artillery instructor. It was a war between brothers.

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The Weapons

The war spurred such innovations as the model 1865 Gatling gun (top), submarines and reconnaissance balloons. The barrel of this smoothbore 6-pounder (bottom) was rifled for extra accuracy and range.

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COVER: In Benjamin West's painting *The Destruction of the French Fleet at La Hogue, 1692*, Dutch and French small boats open hostilities off Barfleur, with a ferocity that will soon be matched by the towering men-of-war from which they were launched (story, P. 38). ABOVE: Mongol warriors of Hülegü Khan extend their devastatingly effective style of mobile warfare to the Middle East, in a painting by Richard Hook (book review, P. 54).

6 EDITORIAL

8 ESPIONAGE

The "French Lady" who came aboard the Baltimore packet St. Nicholas was really from Maryland—and she was no lady.

By Charles Rice

10 PERSONALITY

Considered for command of the British Army, Sir Arthur Currie's achievements were given less appreciation by his fellow Canadians.

By Patrick Bode

16 WEAPONRY

Whether for French heavy cavalry or Beja tribesmen, it took extraordinary courage and fortitude to break a British square.

By Robert O. Deibel

54 BOOKS

The legacy of the Huns, Vikings and Mongols was not exclusively destructive.

By Edmund Sheldon

62 TRAVEL

Bastogne preserves memories of two world wars, but most notably the lore of the Battle of the Bulge.

By John J. Ingolsby

24 LIMITS TO RESISTANCE WEIGHED

Interview by Albert Hemingway

For a Pole caught between the equally brutal forces of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, sheer survival was often the only possible form of resistance.

30 DECISIVE VICTORY LET GO

By James W. Flanagan

General George Washington's tactics at Long Island cost him a battle, but General William Howe's strategy cost him the opportunity to win the war.

38 BATTLERS BECALMED

By Jon Guttman

Hobbled by inflexible orders, French Admiral Tourville had no choice but to accept odds of more than 2-to-1—and came tantalizingly close to reprising his greatest triumph of the previous year.

46 BEYOND CHIVALRY'S CODE

By Eric Niderost

King Philip II of France perceived little threat from England's inept King John, but at Bouvines in 1214 he faced John's formidable ally, Emperor Otto IV, with heavy odds against France's continuing existence.

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"Fought Like a Wolf"

The American Revolutionary War hero was a "British lord."

Here's a quick trivia question for the military history buff. Who was the British-style "lord" who fought on the Patriot side in the American Revolution? Indeed, he was very nearly the only American hero of any stature in George Washington's folly at Long Island, Battle of (related story on Page 30). And could it not also be said that in the early months of the Revolutionary War there was no greater Patriot hero than this selfsame man with his claim to a Scottish peerage?

Arguably so, it seems of William Alexander, native of New York City (circa 1726), resident of New Jersey, early brigadier general in the Continental Army, confidant and able lieutenant to George Washington, occasional scourge to His Majesty's forces in America... and (by his claim) sixth Earl of Stirling.

Certainly a colorful character of his day, a wealthy merchant and landowner, hard-drinking and thus typically described as "ruddy in complexion," he had laid claim to the "empty" earldom after the fifth earl died with no son to follow him. Not a few onlookers in England were consternated to have a Colonial stake out the title as a collateral descendant, especially when a Scottish jury went along with him.

The House of Lords finally put a stop to this nonsense in 1762, but William Alexander apparently was undismayed. He still went about calling himself "Lord Stirling"—and by that name he was forevermore known, even to his troops and his Revolutionary officer colleagues, up to and including Washington.

He did not emerge from the Revolutionary War a great strategist, a commander of historic campaigns or even as the victor of a single major battle...but there would be few men



The self-styled "Lord Stirling" commands his last holding action at Cortelyou House during the Battle of Long Island. The British would hear much more of him thereafter.

around Washington who would emerge with a greater collection of honorable battle stars, with a greater list of little-known but important supporting roles.

He began his Patriot service by raising a company of grenadiers in New Jersey, and then became colonel of New Jersey's 1st Militia Regiment. He was awarded his brigadier's rank after storming and seizing an armed British transport ship off Sandy Hook with a group of volunteers in January 1776.

Briefly serving as commander of New York City (before Washington came down from the Boston area), Stirling began the defensive work that in time produced Forts Lee and Washington on opposite sides of the Hudson and Fort Stirling on the Brooklyn Heights.

He would be very much involved in the Battle of Long Island that transpired the same summer of 1776, and he later would figure, in his various supportive capacities, at White Plains, at Princeton, at Trenton, at Metuchen (his one well-remembered defeat), at Brandywine, at

Germentown and at Monmouth, where he distinguished himself for his command of the left wing.

He then presided at the court-martial of General Charles Lee, whose long-simmering disaffection with Washington had come to open confrontation between the two Virginia residents when they met Sir Henry Clinton's rear guard, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, at Monmouth, N.J., on June 28, 1778.

Soon after, too, it was Stirling who warned Washington of a malicious whispering campaign undermining the latter's reputation and involving certain friends of potential rival Horatio Gates. Later, in 1779, Stirling would be most supportive of another Virginia Lee—in Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee's attack on Paulus Hook.

By some accounts, in fact, Stirling might have saved the day—and early criticism of George Washington—at the Battle of Long Island had his more senior commanders on the scene only paid greater heed to his advice. The story here is that Stirling recognized the danger of a British flanking movement by way of Jamaica Pass and urged its stoppage with a heavy guard.

His advice discarded, he acted as best he could... it was at his order allegedly, that at least a skeletal guard of five was posted there the morning the British did force-march through the very same gateway leading to victory over the Americans.

Whatever the case, no commander of troops could ask a better historical epitaph than the accolade "Lord Stirling" would collect from his British adversaries in recognition of his brave stand with a forlorn rear guard later that very day.

He had, one British officer later said, "fought like a wolf."

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No Lady Was She

But then... in time of war, any ruse will do!

By Charles Rice

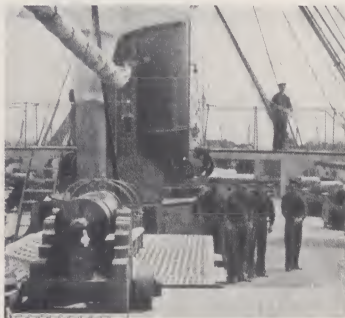
It was summer along the Potomac. Navy Lieutenant Henry Lewis gazed at the broad river he had known since childhood—but now as the dividing line between Confederate Virginia and Union-held Maryland. Federal gunboats patrolled the Potomac, and to Lewis those ships were the enemy. After secession, Henry H. Lewis had become an officer of the Confederate Navy, a fledgling armed force which as yet existed in little more than its brave name.

The most powerful of the Federal warships on the Potomac was the USS *Pawnee*, a steam-powered sloop carrying 15 heavy guns. In May 1861, the *Pawnee* had provided the firepower to support the Union seizure of Alexandria, the first Virginia town lost to the enemy. Now, one month later, the *Pawnee* had turned her attention to the Confederate shore batteries along the Potomac in a series of ferocious ship-to-shore duels. As Confederate Colonel William Bate so colorfully put it, the *Pawnee* "coils about our shore like a wounded viper." If only there were some way to eliminate the menacing enemy ship.

From his vantage point on the heights above the river at Aquia Creek Landing, Lewis could see the *Pawnee* anchored in the distance. Nearby, the Baltimore packet *St. Nicholas* was leisurely making her way upstream. Lewis watched the side-wheeler approach the *Pawnee* unchallenged and then transfer fresh provisions to the warship. Suddenly Henry Lewis was struck by an idea. He knew how to capture the *Pawnee*!

With that same thought, Lewis was about to set in motion a series of events leading to one of the most colorful exploits of the Civil War. Quite unwittingly, he would foster the emergence of the war's notorious "French Lady."

Henry Lewis presented his idea to Brig. Gen. Theophilus H. Holmes, the Con-



Target for tonight: the steam-powered sloop *Pawnee*, one of the most powerful Union vessels at the start of the Civil War and main objective for a remarkable Confederate plot.

federate Army commander in the area. Let him borrow 300 men from Colonel William B. Bate's 2nd Tennessee Infantry Regiment, with its complement of Mississippi River steamboat men, Lewis said, and he would smuggle a handful of armed men aboard the *St. Nicholas*, then seize control of the Baltimore steamer. He would land on the Virginia shore and pick up the foot soldiers. The Tennessee riflemen would be hidden below deck until the *St. Nicholas* had pulled alongside the *Pawnee*. Finally, the Southerners would swarm aboard the *Pawnee* and take her by surprise.

The eager Lewis was to be disappointed. Theophilus Holmes, 56, was a West Point graduate who had spent most of his life in uniform. The North Carolinian had fought the Seminole Indians in Florida, the Navaho in New Mexico, and in the Mexican War. But never had Holmes heard of anything as outlandish as this. The odds were simply too great. He refused to risk his men.

Undaunted, Lewis determined to take his plan to Richmond. He had proceeded as far as Fredericksburg when he met

Captain Matthew Fontaine Maury of the Confederate Navy. Maury was a distinguished scientist who had friends in high places. A devout Catholic, he had even been decorated by the Pope for his research in hydrography. Maury wholeheartedly approved of Lewis' plan. He agreed to see what he could do. The two officers approached the Confederate secretary of the navy with the bold plan. Secretary Stephen R. Mallory felt it was worth a try.

With Mallory's support, the navy officers took the plan to the secretary of war, Leroy Pope Walker. A lawyer from Huntsville, Ala., with little military experience, Walker was reluctant to commit himself to an enterprise that might well fail. Lewis now found himself in the midst of a classic example of passing the buck. On June 25, 1861, Walker wrote General Holmes authorizing him "to cooperate with Lieutenant Lewis, CSN, with any of the force under your command, as you may deem feasible."

Holmes was not so naive, it seems. He suggested to Walker that he be *ordered* to provide the men rather than merely authorized. Walker responded on June 27 by telling Holmes once again that he was *authorized* to provide 500 men, "if you deem the suggestions of Commander Lewis feasible."

If Holmes did not, he should at least dispatch men to Coan River Landing to provide the navy with a sanctuary for a newly captured *St. Nicholas*. But General Holmes promptly answered that he "did not feel justified in ordering volunteer troops on an expedition so fraught with ruinous consequences if it failed, and the success of which required that so many contingencies should be accomplished." He said, "I referred the matter to the colonels of the regiments, and they declined to volunteer their men."

Continued on page 70

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Sir Arthur Currie was Canada's remarkable contribution to WWI.

By Patrick Brode

When Britain's Prime Minister Lloyd George began to consider replacing Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig as commander of the British Expeditionary Force late in World War I, high on the prime minister's list was a Canadian who commanded the four divisions of the Canadian Army Corps.

Under him, the corps had become one of the most formidable units holding the British line, exactly while Lloyd George was losing patience with his Sandhurst-trained generals who had led the British Army into one bloody and unsuccessful frontal assault after another. He felt that little-known Sir Arthur Currie's "great ability, his strength of purpose, and his lack of the fetichisms common to the British officers" marked him for supreme command. In the summer of 1918, Lord Milner, the minister of war, told Currie that if the war extended into 1919, he could expect to be placed in command of the British Army.

After four years of futile trench warfare, the British Empire was on the verge of entrusting its armies to a man who in August 1914 had been a real estate salesman in British Columbia.

Arthur Currie's origins were just about the antithesis of the Sandhurst mold. He was born in a farming community in Southern Ontario in 1875. At the age of 19, he moved "out west" to Victoria, British Columbia. He became a school teacher and later an insurance and real estate salesman.

Despite such an unmilitary background, Currie was an avid part-time soldier. He joined a militia artillery regiment as a gunner in 1897, and by 1901 was a captain. Although life in the prewar Canadian militia was as much social as it was military, Currie was one of those rare militiamen who seriously studied the



In a war allegedly bungled by Sandhurst graduates, former real estate salesman Sir Arthur Currie sought and achieved victories at reduced cost to his Canadian Army Corps.

technology of war. He regularly earned qualification badges from the Royal School of Artillery and by 1909 was the lieutenant colonel of his regiment. During the 1913 inspection of militia units, he impressed the inspecting general, Sir Ian Hamilton, with his regiment's proficiency. After Currie's guns had riddled a ship-towed target, Hamilton turned to Currie to remark, "Your fellows almost cut the tow rope, Colonel." Currie replied, "We haven't tried yet, sir."

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in England, Currie's brigade was sent to France as part of Canada's 1st Infantry Division. Previously, Currie had only commanded a few hundred militiamen. By March of 1915, he was slated to lead 4,000 soldiers into combat. Yet he already was recognized by some as an apt student of war, and one senior British officer commented, "Here is a cheery, shrewd individual who will lead."

The Canadians were about to be severely tested in the crucible of the Ypres salient. This bulge into the German lines was four miles deep and six miles across at its base.

Trench warfare was bad enough, but the exposed nature of the salient meant that Currie's men would be continually open to enemy fire. On April 22, 1915, the Germans launched the first major gas attack of the war on the two French divisions to the Canadians' left. The French troops fled in panic and left the Canadian left flank exposed. If the Canadians could not keep the salient open, their division

and the two British divisions in Ypres were likely to be captured.

On April 24, it was the Canadians' turn to be gassed. However, instead of falling back, they held their positions and drove off the attackers. At the height of the battle, when it seemed that Currie's 2nd Brigade might be overwhelmed, he personally walked back to divisional headquarters over a shell-swept road to plead for reinforcements. Fresh British battalions were in the rear, but none would advance to help the Canadians.

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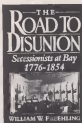
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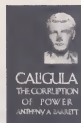
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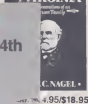
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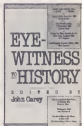
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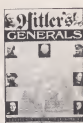
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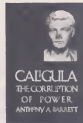
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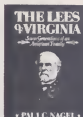
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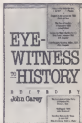
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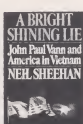
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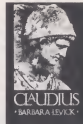
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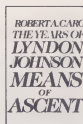
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That night, they were relieved by British troops. The Canadians had held.

The stand of the 1st Canadian Division at Ypres won the division instant fame. And Currie's leadership also attracted official notice. As duly noted, he continually was in contact with his forward battalions and with the units on his flanks. Perhaps no other commander at Ypres had a better idea of the situation in his front lines. He repeatedly identified the tactical feature which would be the focus of the German attack and saw that it was reinforced.

After the battles of Festubert and Givenchy, Currie was promoted to major general, and at the age of 39, became one of the youngest men holding that rank in the British Army. With the formation of a second division, meanwhile, Canada now had an army corps in the field. The corps became an important national symbol, and it was considered expedient to have Canadians as the body's divisional commanders. As a result of his success at Ypres, Currie succeeded to the command of the 1st Canadians. In just months, Arthur Currie had sprung from an obscure militia colonel to a senior officer in the British Army.

Despite his growing reputation and his investiture by King George V with the Companion of the Order of the Bath, Currie still did not leave a very military impression. At 6 feet 4 and 250 pounds, he was a large, bulky man who never looked at ease in a uniform.

The fact still was that more-dapper generals such as Sir Douglas Haig wasted their men in mindless frontal assaults, while Currie was learning how to get results with relatively light casualties.

The Canadian maintained a great respect for Haig, but he was never his puppet. On one occasion, Haig outlined a plan of attack and asked Currie's opinion. "Well, sir," replied the Canadian, "I don't think it is worth a... damn."

Not only was he blunt to his superiors, Currie was no stranger to the front lines. His men appreciated his willingness to share their dangers and were grateful that their commander would assess the difficulty they faced in attacking an entrenched enemy.

Throughout 1916 the Canadians took part in the massive artillery duels on the Western Front. At Mount Sorrel in June, German infantry had pushed the Canadians out of the area's key positions. The commander of the Canadian Corps, General Sir Julian Byng, ordered the 1st Canadians to retake the positions. Currie, always one to disapprove of hasty and unprepared counterattacks, insisted upon taking the time to prepare his men. After massive bombardments had dislodged the Germans, Currie mounted a swift assault that regained the original positions.

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By April 1917, the Canadian Corps was four divisions strong and numbered almost 100,000 men. Its next objective, Vimy Ridge, had already cost tens of thousands of French and British lives. The four-mile-long ridge was the dominant feature in the Arras sector, and it was heavily defended by the Germans. Under the guidance of corps commander Byng, the Canadians systematically planned to wrest the ridge from German control. "Silent" batteries were moved near the front but not used in the preliminary bombardment. That way, they were not subject to counterbattery fire, nor did the enemy know the full strength of the artillery. As for the infantry, Currie had his platoons reorganized into self-contained combat units consisting of various arms. Detailed maps and a plasticene model of the enemy fortifications were circulated among the battalions. Every soldier knew exactly which position his unit was expected to capture.

As a result, Vimy Ridge fell to the Canadians on the first day of the offensive, Easter Monday, 1917. Currie's division seized all its objectives and sustained only light casualties. Moreover, the Canadians had won a victory when Allied morale desperately needed one. As a reward, Currie was knighted and given command of the corps.

Vimy Ridge also illustrated Currie's attitude toward incurring casualties. Prior to the battle, other divisions were sending out large raids on the German trenches. Currie thought that those raids wasted lives and instead he used small trench raids to gather information. General Byng criticized Currie for this and, in a violent tirade, he accused the 1st Canadians of "losing their go." Despite these accusations, Currie persisted in his tactics and his division's spectacular results on Easter Monday proved that his men had lost none of their "go."

The fighting spirit—and acumen—of the Canadian Corps was now renowned, and Field Marshal Haig was about to use the Canadian brethren to retrieve his fortunes at Passchendaele. From July to September of 1917 the British Army had tried to thrust out from the Ypres salient. The effort had cost hundreds of thousands of casualties but had not destroyed the defending Germans—nor had it captured the village of Passchendaele. In October 1917 the Canadians were sent back to the accused salient.

Currie went to the front lines—and was shocked. The battlefield was a total quagmire. Tanks could not advance, the infantry would be mired down and even the all-important field artillery could not advance to its positions. Currie strongly protested to Haig and told him that the corps would sustain 16,000 casualties for

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Immovable As A Rock

When the thundering cavalry appears irresistible, what about the square?

By Robert O. Deibel

For hundreds of years, the question has been: What occurs when an irresistible force meets an immovable object? Well, as one case in point, if the force is heavy cavalry and the object is the infantry formation known as "the square," the answer has been shown again and again—the object, the square, triumphs.

This phenomenon was particularly evident during the square's zenith as a military tactic in the early 1800s, as the British defense against the French mounted units during the Napoleonic Wars. In the Peninsular War, at Waterloo and other meetings, the infantry square proved itself as a formidable defense against the justly feared cavalry.

Indeed, without the tactic of a square, who—or what—could have stood up to the cavalry? To an infantryman "armored" only in a cloth uniform, it was a horrifying and demoralizing experience to see an adversary of nearly a ton, the combination of man and horse, bearing down upon him.

And, too, the often-heralded "thin red line"—or, for that matter, a massed line of troops—could easily be run down, the line penetrated and the men on foot forced to fight on two fronts.

When surrounded by enemies superior in either manpower, armament or mobility, it takes no great genius to realize that the best defense is to band together, back to back, with every available weapon pointed outward toward the foe, placing most-valued assets, such as supplies, in the center of the defensive formation. This common-sense response has come down through the centuries—i.e., the covered wagons forming a circle as defense against mounted Indians.

Such formations should not be confused, however, with the phalanx of Persian, Macedonian or Swiss fame, which was a solid, rather than hollow, mass of



French cuirassiers charge a square of Scots Highlanders in Félix Philippoteaux's epic painting of the Battle of Waterloo. Despite repeated efforts, not one square was broken.

infantry, counting on its very weight to subdue opposition. Physics teaches us that mass times velocity equals momentum; the phalanx had little forward speed but its very weight gave it the momentum to crush opponents. That very fact meant it was entirely offensive in use, not defensive.

The square, on the other hand, definitely was defensive. Usually of equal size on all sides and stationary, it took on various shapes according to terrain and military situation—large and loose for crossing open country when the enemy was at a distance, and small and compact for resisting attack. Even in the jungle, a loose square prevented the enemy from falling upon the rear.

If conditions were ideal, the square was formed on the reverse slope of a hillside and then moved to open ground to combat enemy forward movement.

It wasn't a bit difficult for infantrymen, confronted by armored horsemen, to see the advantage of forming a square. The

tendency in the face of peril is to bunch up, in the instinctive belief that such close numbers gives greater security. As further comfort to contemplate, a wounded man could be dragged into the comparative safety of the center of the square. Another advantage: If the troops are in square, they require a smaller ratio of officers than troops assembled in a long line; officers grouped in the center can direct by voice any one of the square's four sides (and the flat of their ordinarily useless swords now could be used to herd laggards or deserters back into place).

Timing was of the greatest importance in forming this defense. Cavalry could, without making any actual overt move, pose a threat. By lining up in sight but out of short range, it could force the enemy into squares, with artillery then taking a formi-

dable toll of the men gathered in such dense formations. A heavy onus was thus placed on the infantry officer commanding. If formed too quickly, his square made an excellent artillery target; if formed too late, it ran the risk of the enemy cavalry being upon it before the defensive firepower was organized. Success depended upon firm discipline—and the hardy, usually slum-born trooper of that era usually did stand staunchly in place. Wellington once remarked that he didn't know if his troops frightened the enemy but they certainly frightened him!

Both fortitude and a level head were necessary. The interior of the square became suffocatingly thick with smoke, the air heavy with the smell of burnt cartridges. Hearing impairment was also common, since the soldier's ears were only inches away from muzzle blasts of the muskets held by comrades close by. Standing or kneeling, the men of the square were excellent stationary targets, so

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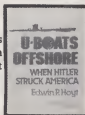
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PERSONALITY

Continued from page 14

a militarily useless objective. Haig took Currie aside and told him, "Some day I will tell you why, but Passchendaele must be taken."

Taken it was—but at a cost of 15,654 Canadian casualties. After the war, Currie learned that Haig had persisted in the attack as a desperate bid to end the year with a major victory. Currie's men had floundered and died in the mud of Flanders for a largely symbolic "victory."

After Passchendaele, the corps was taken out of the line for re-fitting. It did not take part in the Allied defenses against the German offensive of March 1918. Much to Haig's displeasure, Currie would not permit the corps to be dismantled to reinforce the British but instead insisted that the Canadians would only fight as one army corps. On August 8, 1918, the Canadians did take part in the assault on Amiens. The corps advanced eight miles, farther than any other Allied unit.

The battles from Amiens to Mons are sometimes called "Canada's Hundred Days," a series of successful attacks that became a major factor in breaking the back of the German Army. One major obstacle remained: the Canal du Nord. The east bank was heavily defended, and the canal itself was 100 feet wide, with flooded marshes on both sides.

As usual, Currie went forward to look over the terrain. He concluded that a frontal assault would cause devastating casualties and have no good prospect of success. He proposed that the entire corps shift to its right and attack across a dry section of the canal which had never been completed. Currie wished to concentrate all of his strength on a point 1½ miles wide and, once this point was breached, to fan out and envelop the enemy. The plan was not without risks. If the Germans discovered the concentration of four divisions in this sector, their artillery could easily blast the corps to pieces. The operation also required complicated maneuvers by the attacking units to avoid colliding with each other. The British First Army Headquarters was taken aback by Currie's strategy. General Byng went to Currie and asked if he knew that he was attempting the most difficult operation of the war? Currie was fully aware of the dangers but felt the gamble was worth it.

In the dusk of September 26, the attacking platoons moved up to the start lines. The night passed safely, and when the attack went in the following morning, the defenders were overwhelmed. Canadian casualties were light, while more than 7,000 German soldiers and

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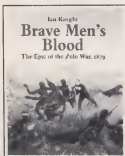
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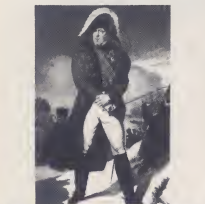
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250 guns were captured. The last major obstacle in front of the Canadians had been cleared.

For the first time in their experience, Canadian soldiers hurried through intact villages and past harvested fields. By November 10, they were approaching Mons, the site of the first battle between German and British troops in August 1914. The city would be a prestigious prize, but Currie was not about to waste lives to capture a symbol. He ordered his troops to proceed cautiously and, without a single Canadian being killed, the old battlefield was back in Allied hands at the time of the Armistice on November 11. It was an emotional victory for Currie. "We, the young whelps of the old line, were able to take the ground lost in 1914," he exclaimed later.

Upon his return to Canada, Sir Arthur Currie could have expected praise as Canada's greatest soldier. He had commanded an army larger than Wellington's, and he had commanded it well. However, the postwar revulsion with the seemingly endless casualty lists had set in. Almost 60,000 Canadians had died, truly grievous losses for a country of only seven million. The United States lost almost as many men, but they came from a population of 95 million.

Public resentment against military leaders was embodied in comments by the former minister of militia and defense, Sir Sam Hughes. In the Canadian Parliament, Hughes accused Currie of incompetence and glory seeking. Hughes alleged that Currie had sacrificed hundreds of young men in an egocentric attempt to take Mons. The government was slow to defend Currie, and such talk was not quashed until Currie sued a newspaper for libel in 1927 and proved that he had done his best to prevent needless casualties—and that Mons had been taken without any losses!

After the war, Currie declined to stay in the army. He became the principal and vice chancellor of McGill University and held those posts until his death in 1933. He remained bitter over the spiteful rumors and Parliament's refusal even to give him a vote of thanks.

Typical of Canada's eagerness to forget the war was Currie's returning reception in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1919. Only a small official delegation met him at the quayside. The general's reaction was evident when one young officer who had served with him in France went up to him: "I managed to salute him and said 'Welcome home, sir.' Then for a moment he lost control of himself. His eyes got a bit wet, his lips trembled, he put one hand on my shoulder, two fingers of the other in my Sam Browne belt, quietly shook me and never said a word." □

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Albert Reich's Artillery in Action has its setting in the German invasion of Poland in September 1939—the beginning of six years of war in which the Polish nation and its people would suffer the longest continuous ordeal.



RESISTANCE WEIGHED

For the Polish Resistance during World War II, there was a time to strike and a time to hold back. All too often, it had to be... hold back!

Interview By Albert Hemingway

Blitzkrieg! It was at 4:45 a.m. on September 1, 1939, that World War II officially began in Europe, with the combined thunder of German guns, tanks and airplanes bursting upon the borders of Poland—and beyond. In no time, the great mechanized columns had thrust across (even if followed by horse-drawn supply wagons), and the *Luftwaffe* had seized control of the air.

By September 4, the Polish Corridor, that narrow stretch of land created after World War I as a rankling thorn in Germany's side, had been seized. The port city of Danzig, the majority of its population of German descent, soon was taken.

Poland reeled; disaster followed upon disaster. On September 17, the Soviet Union also leaped into the fray—on Nazi Germany's side. As the Red Army advanced westward, the *Wehrmacht* was moving rapidly to the east—with the Polish Army crushed between them. On September 27, the Polish capital, Warsaw, fell. With only sporadic (but fierce) fighting left, Russia and Germany formally divided Poland between them the next day. Terrorism, murder and various atrocities soon emerged in both occupation zones... Poland as a sovereign nation would be extinguished for years. But abroad, there still was a government-in-exile; there still were Polish armed forces fighting with the Allies... and at home, there soon was the Resistance, its task well nigh hopeless.

Alojzy Szupak, formerly an officer in the Polish Army, was one of those who stayed home and fought back against the reign of terror implemented by both enemies. He would be awarded Poland's highest decoration, the *Virtuti Militari* (5th class) for his own personal bravery.

Hemingway: Were you already in the army when your country was invaded by the Germans?

Szupak: Yes, in 1938 I interrupted my studies at the University of Wilno and joined the Polish Army. I enlisted mainly because of my own economic situation. I went to officer's school and became a reserve officer. I was able to go to college because my brother, who lived in America, sent me \$50 a year. Upon graduation, I was a candidate officer, and finally I was commissioned a lieutenant in the Polish Army.

Hemingway: In the infantry?

Szupak: Well, actually that's a funny thing. I studied law in college and they placed me in the Engineer Corps. But somehow I managed.

Hemingway: And what happened when your country was invaded?

Szupak: Even before the invasion, on March 21, 1939, the Germans demanded passage through the Polish Corridor to Germany. This was refused and we were immediately alerted.

Hemingway: You knew war was coming then?

Szupak: We knew about it. Once the Germans conquered Czechoslovakia, we realized Poland was surrounded on three sides—north, west and south—by Germans. To accommodate their expansion, which Hitler constantly spoke about, they'd have to go through Polish territory. War was coming. So, on March 21, part of our army was mobilized. As a matter of fact, our school, which was supposed to be 12 months long, was reduced to 11 months. We were then transferred to our units. I was placed in the 76th Regiment and sent south. We were in reserve and sent in to "plug the holes," as you would say. We knew Poland had no chance against the Germans. We could not afford to build planes and tanks.

Hemingway: Is history right in saying Poland collapsed in approximately one month?



A rotte (flight) of Junkers Ju-87B Stukas heads for its target over Poland. The terror they wrought proved minor compared to what the Germans would do after Poland was occupied.

Sztupak: That depends. The main army surrendered by October 7. Various regiments fought much longer. For example, one cavalry group, led by a Colonel Dobrzynski, fought until 1940. He said he would never surrender. Whether that was smart or not I can't say. Later, the Germans were annihilating villages. So, we in the Polish underground asked him to surrender because for every German killed they would kill 50 Poles. For instance, we could have easily wiped out the German secret police, but we did not. We would have sacrificed 50 of our countrymen for every German we killed. That terrorism stopped us from indiscriminate acts of sabotage.

Hemingway: How could you fight back then?

Sztupak: We always sabotaged between villages and in forests. In this way, the Germans could not take revenge upon any villagers.

Hemingway: How did you yourself become involved with the Resistance?

Sztupak: When we were retreating, they put me on the end. I was picking up these weapons being dropped by the troops. I had 21 horse-drawn wagons and managed to confiscate quite a few weapons. I was going south to the Vistula River. I walked 300 miles with my unit! Finally, I went to the eastern part of Poland with my platoon and we buried our arms.

Hemingway: What kind of weapons did you have?

Sztupak: We had rifles, a few Tommy guns and 21 kilograms of TNT. There were 52 of us from all over Poland. I finally settled in my village of Brzozow, which means "birch tree" in English.

Hemingway: And then what?

Sztupak: The soldiers went to their homes. Fortunately, we had individual farms. Soviets were all over the place. I started working on my farm. As you know, on September 17, Poland was attacked by Russia; my village then was under Soviet rule. They tried to arrest everybody who had any education. Of course, I didn't tell them I had attended college. They divided us into districts consisting of about five villages. The Russian in charge was like a mayor and was a good person. He told us that he would not harm us. However, he also said, "If

the NKVD [the forerunner of the KGB] wants to do something, I cannot help you." Later, we found out we were on the list to be sent to Siberia. Fortunately for us, war broke out between the Soviet Union and Germany on June 22, 1941. Quite a few people were sent away and never heard from again. In fact, from September 1939 to June 1941, more Poles were sent to Siberia than the Germans killed.

Hemingway: But the Germans had their SS, their "extermination" lists for occupied Poland.

Sztupak: Well, the Germans didn't have this machinery to kill people yet. They were organizing it at this time.

Hemingway: So you would say the Soviets treated the Poles worse than the Germans.

Sztupak: Yes, they did. However, the Germans were worse against the Jews. In Poland, we had the largest concentration of Jews in the world. Some escaped to Russia. Of the approximately 3.5 million Jews in Poland, 2.6 million were exterminated in the death camps. This was terrible. We in the Resistance knew about it but were unable to help them. For example, two of us were traveling in a wagon one day and picked up two young girls who asked for a ride. We knew they were Jewish and to harbor them was punishable by death. They wanted to get past a German checkpoint. It was manned by an old soldier who didn't really care and we got past with no trouble. We went up a hill and were met by two Polish vagrants who asked about the girls. They knew they were Jewish also and took them from us. I had a choice: kill those bums or let them take the girls. They took them and turned them over to the Nazis. Almost 50 years has passed, and this incident still burns in my memory.

Hemingway: Could you have helped them?

Sztupak: It was a desperate situation. I knew that I could not save their lives. But with my connections in the Resistance I could have given them forged passports saying they were Russian.

Hemingway: What became of the two girls?

Sztupak: Certainly the Nazis killed them...two young girls...going on 50 years...I still think of it.

Hemingway: Could the Resistance do anything?

Sztupak: At times. I'll give you another example. Our neighbors were hiding two Jewish tailors in their house and they were denounced by a person living nearby. The Germans

DENIALS OVER KATYN MASSACRE

Just before Easter in April 1943, three young Poles from the Todt Organization, the slave-labor group comprised of various people from German-occupied territories, were cutting down trees in the Katyn Forest near the village of Kosogory. The workers observed that the trees were apparently just transplanted from another section of the forest.

Thinking there might be valuable "treasure" secretly buried here, the trio fervently dug until they discovered a pair of finely crafted brown riding boots protruding from the dirt. Excited over their find, they tugged with all their might—and recoiled at the sight of a badly decomposed body. When they regained their composure, they saw that the individual had his hands tied behind him and had been shot in the

back of the head. He was wearing the uniform of a captain in the Polish Army. Obviously, an execution. And not the only one.

What the three workers uncovered that day would become known as the Katyn Massacre. The question, for many years, was: Who did it? Russians or Germans?

Today, it is known—and admitted in the Soviet Union—that the mass execution was carried out by the Russian NKVD. The German report stated that 4,260 Poles, all prisoners and the "cream" of Poland's army officer corps, were taken to Kosogory to end up systematically murdered. They took the railway from Kozelsk Prison Camp in April 1940. They were then herded onto buses that took them to the Katyn Forest. Each was shot in the

came and killed not only the two Jews but the entire Polish family harboring them. The Resistance issued orders to punish the person who did this terrible thing. We only had three ways for revenge: warnings; corporal punishment, such as 50 or 100 lashes; or killing them. The person who informed on that Polish family was eliminated.

Hemingway: How was the Resistance initially organized?

Sztupak: We started right in Warsaw, in fact, even before it surrendered. The first national leader was General Tokalzewski. It was based on two elements. One element was the instructors in the villages and the other was the soldiers. It broke down from national to states, to counties, finally to the villages. The orders were filtered down to us. The Polish people hated being occupied by a foreign army. It was humiliating. For example, if you passed a German soldier you had to take your cap off and bow. When you passed a German soldier on the sidewalk, a Pole had to move out of his way and walk in the street. Every day there were insults. There was no freedom, no schools, huge taxes were paid to the German administration. And the Gestapo would arrive one day and just kill at random.

Hemingway: This was done indiscriminately?

Sztupak: If they thought a village cooperated with the Resistance, they'd wipe everybody out. It was a program of terror. However, in 1941, when the Nazis attacked the Soviets, they were dispersed over a greater area. They lost some control. So in some villages there were only five Germans. We could have squashed them like bugs!

Hemingway: Why didn't you?

Sztupak: Remember, it was 50 Poles to one German. We had to be careful.

Hemingway: You held a high rank in the Polish Resistance?

Sztupak: In the beginning I started at the bottom. Then I was a company commander, and then a battalion commander. My county had three battalions. All activities involving sabotage belonged to me. However, not everybody was fighting. There was the administration part, too. We were preparing for the day of national resurrection in Poland. I only controlled the military operations in my county. Someone else headed the administrative portion of it. My main concern was the fighting.

Hemingway: How many were under you in your county?

Sztupak: I had about 1,500 people in my command.

back of the head with a .755-caliber World War I era German pistol by the Soviet secret police and each body dumped into a mass grave. Those who resisted had their heads covered by a sack with a rope tied around their neck. Some of them suffocated to death.

For approximately two weeks the killings were performed, until the entire camp, with the exception of a handful of prisoners, was emptied. Other Soviet executions, engineered by Generals Beria and Markulov of the NKVD, with Premier Joseph Stalin's blessing, were done in the same fashion at Ostaszew and Starobielsk. The bodies from the two latter camps have yet to be found.

Why Katyn? Why did the Soviet leaders fear the Poles? Simply, the Soviets were planning ahead toward the day when they would establish a Communist government in Poland and wanted no trouble from the intelligentsia of the population.

Among the men unearthed in the seven mass graves: General Mieczyslaw Smorawinski; Brig. Gen. Bronislaw Bohaterewicz; Major Jan Leon Ziolkowski; Thaddeus Jankowski, director of the National Library in Grodno; plus doctors, dentists, architects, all learned, well-educated individuals, leaders and potential leaders. One was a woman, Mrs. Janina Lewandowski, a pilot in the Polish Air Force.

Soon after the discovery of the graves, the Germans blamed the Russians and vice versa. The Allies, wary of Nazi propaganda tricks, at first believed the Russians.

It was only in 1990, 50 years later, that the USSR, under the impetus of its latest leadership, acknowledged that Soviet personnel were responsible for Katyn—and reported that its own investigators had found thousands of additional bodies.

A.H.



Polish troops stage a counterattack outside Warsaw. Some Polish Army units did not surrender until October 7, 1939, and a cavalry group fought on until 1940.

Hemingway: What were some of the activities you were involved in?

Sztupak: First, we had a radio that we monitored—which, by the way, was a capital offense. If the Germans caught you with a radio, they executed you. So we never transmitted. Also, we published an underground newspaper. It was only one page. We'd place it near churches or on trees near villages during the night. If a Pole was cooperating with the Germans, we'd print his name. In this way the people would know about his treachery. Instead of killing him, we'd expose him. Unless he was working with the Gestapo—then we'd kill him. We'd also gather as many weapons as we could. Also, when the Germans were retreating, we hit them more. We openly engaged them in combat. We didn't fear their reprisals then. We hit cars and trucks. It was all hit-and-run. We'd hide in the bushes and the forests. We could make a hasty retreat if we had to. They were afraid to follow us in the dense forests.

Hemingway: You mean when they were retreating from the Russians in 1943 and 1944?

Sztupak: Yes. Now our activities increased. We destroyed bridges and sections of railroads. We also ambushed German patrols. Sabotaging the railroads was pretty easy. Just some dynamite in the right places did the job. The problem was they repaired them very quickly. We disrupted their troop movements to some extent, but they had special repair gangs. We hindered them for a day or so. Bridges took longer to repair. The problem here was that the Germans constantly patrolled. Their sentries were on the alert for our sabotage. Our code name was Tempest. We did these things for the Soviets. Unfortunately, the Soviets didn't care about the Polish people.

Hemingway: You were actually caught between two enemies.

Sztupak: Yes. We even contacted the Soviet partisans. However, these partisans, we discovered later, were NKVD. And now they knew the territory and the people.

Hemingway: Were they to infiltrate?

Sztupak: They never infiltrated my group. For instance, when we received air drops, I never gave my name. I gave the



A Pole pays the price of resistance—either as a captured guerrilla, or as one of 50 civilians executed in reprisal for every one German soldier killed by the Resistance. Possession of a radio was also a capital offense.

Soviets another person to contact. I already didn't trust them. I had studied the Soviet system before the war. At the university I had courses in political science. I read Lenin, Stalin and Marx. I knew what was going on in Russia under the Communist regime.

Hemingway: Meanwhile, you were supplied mainly by air drops?

Sztupak: No, most of the air drops were in the western and southern parts of Poland. We used the weapons we had buried when Poland fell in 1939, and we also manufactured our own arms.

Hemingway: What about the weapons the Germans were leaving when the Soviet troops were chasing them from Russia? I'm sure you were confiscating those arms.

Sztupak: Definitely. By 1944, we started picking up more arms. We also acquired heavier machine guns and more explosives, too.

Hemingway: What happened when the Red Army occupied Poland?

Sztupak: I had no illusions at all. I knew we would have no freedom under Soviet rule. They came in July 1944 and started arresting people at once. For example, in October and November, they apprehended more than 5,000 in the county [his home county] of Sokolka. We had no hope at all. We were still suffering.

Hemingway: You got rid of the Germans but the Russians were just as bad?

Sztupak: Unfortunately, yes. They had a better organization. The Germans were spread thin because they had attacked Russia. And as I stated before, they lost their control. But the Russians were brutal. In every city and town the NKVD was stationed.

Hemingway: Did you conduct any sabotage actions against the Russians?

Sztupak: Yes! We kept the same structure even though the Polish government announced on January 17, 1945, it would dissolve the underground army. We didn't do it. However, the organization started to disintegrate. We had been fighting for six years. Sadly, some people cooperated with the Russians. There was a book written by Maria Turlejska entitled *This Generation Is Black With Sorrow*. The book explains the legal murdering. All the courts were corrupt. They actually conducted the terrorism. There were no laws as such. The book tells of the innocent people murdered by the Communists as alleged enemies of the state. My county suffered the most in this Communist purge. I took leave from the Resistance in August 1945 and went to Cracow, which is about 400 miles south of my district. I wanted to continue my studies.

Hemingway: Did you have any close calls with the Gestapo or NKVD?

Sztupak: Several times. One friend of mine killed a German about 20 miles away. He came to me for help. The Gestapo immediately arrested 50 people and announced they would execute them unless the killer was handed over to them. I knew some of the people arrested. I yelled at him for doing such an idiotic thing. What should I do? I contacted the Resistance headquarters in the county of Sokolka and asked for orders. But I told them I would not cooperate with the Germans. Finally, I gave him a passport to flee. However, he was apprehended later and killed by the Gestapo in Warsaw. The 50 hostages, of course, were executed. One of them was a Catholic priest.

Hemingway: That was an agonizing decision.

Sztupak: Another time I was chased by some German soldiers. I was only armed with a pistol, so I didn't stand a chance if I stood and fought back. I managed to get away. I was on horseback. I remember also listening to the radio one day with a friend. Remember, this was punishable by death. We were



Germans inspect the graves of Polish victims of the Soviet NKVD in the Katyn Forest, a propaganda coup that the Nazis played for all it was worth. The Soviets later admitted to the deed—and to their own discovery of still more gravesites.

in a barn listening and cleaning our weapons. It was July 1943. I stepped outside and saw a German patrol heading toward the barn. I didn't have time to tell my friend, so I ran over to "greet" them. Luckily, they weren't coming for us. They just wanted to repair their wagon that had broken down. So I helped them repair it and off they went. All the time my friend is unaware they are just outside the barn! When they left I told him what happened. He started shaking like a leaf! If they ever discovered the radio and weapons, it would have been the end of us!

Hemingway: What finally happened to your own group?

Stupak: I dissolved it myself. I told them to go home. I realized to survive I had to separate myself from the underground movement. At that time, the Soviets only controlled the large cities. Eventually they found out about the underground's activities. From three districts, mine included, approximately 1,000 Resistance fighters were captured. To this day, nobody knows where they were taken and killed. My friends, my soldiers, my acquaintances, my neighbors... gone.

Hemingway: Sounds like someone informed on your group.

Stupak: Fear took hold and some people told them [the Soviets] everything. Nobody returned. However, last year I went back because there were rumors that they were buried in a place two miles from the Soviet border.

Hemingway: You returned to Poland?

Stupak: Several times. The Communists put a price on my head, but then contacted my brother in 1956 saying I could return because I was now a "good guy."

Hemingway: How much money had the Communists offered for you?

Stupak: In dollars it was nothing. Maybe \$100.

Hemingway: That was quite a bit of money to them.

Stupak: At that time, yes.

Hemingway: How did you finally escape from Poland?

Stupak: I fled under the assumed name of Alojzy Stupak. I took the birth certificate of a person who died in Poland but was born in the United States. I legalized my status more than 30 years ago. I had friends who got me the necessary papers to leave. I told them straight out I had to get out of Poland or the Communists would kill me. I received help, especially from one woman's friend, probably her lover, who gave me permission to go. I arrived in the United States on December 13, 1946, aboard a ship named after the great war correspondent Ernie Pyle.

Hemingway: And so you were very lucky.

Stupak: Yes, of the six million Jews killed by the Germans, 2.6 million were from Poland. And this is just an estimate. Unbelievable crimes against humanity. And not only the Jews but against the other Polish people, too. But think about how many people the Soviets killed! Nobody will ever know. We talk about the great advances mankind has made in the 20th century? This is a barbaric age! This age will be known in history as the Barbarian Age.

Hemingway: What do you think about the events in Poland today?

Stupak: From a political point of view, I'm delighted. I've always predicted Communism will collapse. I've lectured in this country extensively on the subject. Economically, Poland is in terrible condition. The bare essentials aren't there. No food, no clothing, no salt, no sugar... no matches! Imagine! People will revolt. Poland has suffered, and it's going to be hard to rebuild after 45 years of Communist rule. □

Albert Hemingway, a Vietnam veteran (U.S. Marine Corps), suggests as additional reading: Time Stopped At 6:30: The Untold Story of the Katyn Massacre, by Thaddeus Wittlin; An Army In Exile, by Wladislaw Anders; and The Inhuman Land, by Joseph Czapski.

DECISIVE VICTORY LET GO

At Long Island in 1776, geography, plan
and execution all favored the
British...but this battle would not
win them the war.

By James W. Flanagan

The Rev. Mr. Shewkirk nervously watched the storm outside. His view was obscured by the darkness and the sheets of driving rain, but every few minutes, the scene would be brightly illuminated by great flashes of lightning that seared through the sky. When that happened he could briefly see his Moravian Church, its steeple seeming to bend with the hurricane-force winds. He turned again to his diary, while the thunder crashed in never-ending reverberations outside, and wrote that it seemed to him neither man nor beast could be out on such a night.

He was wrong there! For all across the great British encampment on nearby Staten Island figures scurried through the storm. Blue-jacketed sailors ran nimbly across rain-swept decks, lashing down every movable object. Others, on land, splashed through mud to rescue frightened horses or, cursing, pulled barrel after barrel of powder under make-shift shelters.

Through all the chaos, one figure glided unobtrusively. The man watched as grunting lobsterbacks sought cover from the storm...watched and counted. Moving toward the beach, he was in time to see one of the row galleys lose its mast to the storm, smashed to driftwood by the wind. And before the great blow died down at 10 o'clock that night the same figure would be standing before General Washington at his headquarters in New York City. He had been sent as a spy to determine just when the British armada standing off New York would be ready to begin the invasion.

From his agent's report, Washington was almost certain that tomorrow—August 22, 1776—would see the British launch their long-expected assault. For almost one month, as General William Howe and his brother Admiral "Black Dick" Howe had been gathering ships, soldiers and supplies at Staten Island, the colonial generals had witnessed the growth of the largest overseas expedition ever launched by the Empire.



Alonzo Chappel's painting *Battle of Long Island* depicts the struggle's furious finale. As General Lord Stirling's sixth and last assault fails near Yellow Mill, his Maryland troops scatter into the marshes by the Gowanus River. Only 10 would escape.





George Washington and his officers ponder their next move in defense of New York. The city's vulnerability to shelling from Brooklyn Heights compelled the insurgent commander to divide his already meager forces.

never actually relieved Sullivan. Consequently, it was Sullivan's thought that he was to command the troops in Brooklyn while overall strategy was left to Putnam. Needless to say, this was not Putnam's interpretation and, later, Washington himself crossed the river and began issuing orders, thus further muddling an already confused situation. Eventually, Washington made it clear that Putnam was in overall command, but he still failed, as did Putnam, to clearly define the responsibilities of the subordinate commanders.

Washington's fears of being trapped in New York were fully justified. As General William Howe sailed toward Staten Island, he had had just such a plan in mind, but both Sir William and his sea-roving brother were part of that clique of British soldiers and politicians who hoped for a peaceful resolution to the colonial "difficulty." In Sir William's pocket was the "key" to peace, the King's Pardon.

What Howe did not yet understand was that the recent adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the rebel Congress had moved the war to a new stage. The time for peaceful reconciliation had passed. Howe was further hampered by the fact that he had no real power to negotiate with the colonists, but merely the ability to pardon those who wished to repent for their rebellious acts.

Howe's attempts to contact Washington had something of the comic opera about them. As he addressed his letters to a "Mr. Washington," he was told that there was no one of that name in the colonial camp, but there was a "General Washington." Howe could not use the title "General" without admitting Washington had a right to it. Eventually he hit on the idea of sending the letters to "the Honorable George Washington, Esq." As Washington had used the same form of address in sending a letter to Howe the previous year, he hardly could refuse it now.

In the long run the charade made little difference. Although Howe was eventually put in touch with representatives from Congress, nothing was to come of it. Negotiations continued

throughout the campaign, but the rebels were not looking for pardons, and Howe had no authority to go any further, and there the matter rested. His concept of himself as the great conciliator did have a marked impact on British strategy, though, and for that reason is of great importance. Gone was Howe's initial attitude that the colonial army must be smashed. Shedding an excessive amount of colonial blood might make reconciliation all the more difficult.

It was with this thought in mind that Howe laid out the groundwork for the coming battle. Instead of making the rebel army his goal, he would aim to occupy territory. In his mind, the more land that was brought back under British control, the more difficulties the Patriots would have in keeping an army in the field. Coupled with some small defeats, this policy would dissolve the rebellion.

So, in the end, Washington's fears of being trapped in New York City during August would prove groundless—not due to any great strategy on his part, but rather to a change of emphasis in the mind of the British commander.

The British still would land on Long Island the morning after the stormy night of August 21. And Denysess Ferry offered the shortest distance between British-occupied Staten Island and Brooklyn. It was the spot chosen by Howe for the advance guard to land, and to Sir George Collier's man-of-war *Rainbow* went the task of cleaning out any rebels who might contest that landing. Following Collier, three more frigates, the *Rose*, the *Phoenix* and the *Greyhound*, took up station, and were soon joined by the bomb ketches *Carcass* and *Thunder*.

There was little need for such strength. The only rebel troops encamped in the area were 200 soldiers of the 1st Pennsylvania Continental Regiment. Their commander quickly noted the situation and just as quickly ordered his men to skedaddle down the road toward New Utrecht.

British Generals Henry Clinton and Charles Cornwallis led the advance guard of the army, some 4,000 men, mostly

grenadiers and lights, across the Narrows. A Hessian diarist recorded the scene for posterity: "We weighed anchor and lay close over against Long Island. The ships of war came within range of the shore and pointed their cannon at the beach. At eight in the morning the whole coast swarmed with boats. At half-past eight the admiral hoisted the red flag, and in a moment all the boats reached the shore. . . . Not a soul opposed our landing. By noon Howe had ferried 15,000 soldiers safely onto the shores of Brooklyn."

It was a couple of days before the remaining Imperial troops, some 5,000 Hessians, were ferried over. Their commander, von Heister, had not wanted to move so quickly, his men having just completed the long voyage to America. Howe hoped to shame him into moving by going first, as if the Hessians were not necessary. The ploy worked—just to do the English one better, the Hessians stood in the boats, with parade-ground stiffness, through the whole trip across the Narrows.

Putnam soon heard about the British landing at Denysess Ferry, and of his personal courage there was no doubt. But the situation called for more than just rugged personal characteristics. If battle were joined immediately, only 4,000 Americans would be on station to hold the British. Even though

Washington immediately dispatched reinforcements, that still gave Putnam only 5,800 men, two-thirds of them militia, to face off Howe's veterans. Washington was still holding most of his army, including all its best units, on his side of the river. As late as the 24th, he still thought Brooklyn was a feint and that the real assault would be against Manhattan. And here was one of the dangers of fighting in Tory territory. While Howe's new camp was immediately overrun with a horde of sympathizers willing to tell the British everything they knew about the American dispositions, the Americans were forced to work completely in the dark as to British intentions.

Howe had no intention of hurling his men blindly against the American positions. For the next few days he was content to gather information about the terrain and the enemy forces that occupied it. That is not to say that there was no fighting. Both sides threw forward skirmishers to feel out the enemy and occupy strategic points, and if the Americans expected that fighting "Indian style" through the thickets of Brooklyn would upset the Hessians, they were quickly disabused of the idea. The *jaeger* troops of the fragmented German states were raised and trained for exactly that style of warfare. A great number of them had been huntsmen before joining the army. The Hessian diarist observed the American

tactics, but did not seem unduly upset by them:

"At noon I . . . was waked by two cannon-balls which covered me with earth. The rebels have some very good marksmen, but some of them have wretched guns, and most of them shoot crooked. But they are clever at hunters' wiles. They climb trees, they crawl forward on their bellies for one hundred and fifty paces, shoot, and go as quickly back again. They make themselves shelters of boughs, etc."

Despite the skirmishes that told Howe exactly where the American lines were drawn, his main body of troops sat on the coastal plain. The Americans kept most of their forces inside the Brooklyn Heights entrenchments. Reinforcements had trickled in, and Putnam's force was now close to 9,000 men. Between these two positions stretched a long line of low, wooded hills called the heights of Guan (or Guian). Rising up to 100 or 150 feet, they were extremely rugged in most places on the southern slope, facing the British, but the northern part was more gentle. The entire ridge was covered by thickets and brambles that were completely impassable to horsed artillery or men in formation.

There were, however, a few breaks in this wooded curtain that screened the American position. The first was a road that ran right up along the coast and skirted the swamp at Gowanus. Farther inland, primitive roads led to two passes, Bedford and Flatbush, respectively. It was at those three spots that Putnam had deployed his forward troops.

The coastal route was guarded by General "Lord Stirling," in reality, William Alexander from New Jersey. He claimed that a lapsed Scottish earldom had passed to him through a distant cousin. His claim was upheld in Scotland

BASTION DIFFICULT TO DEFEND

George Washington had never wanted to fight around New York—the whole geography of the region argued against it. Congress, however, had argued in favor of trying to hold the city. Its Colonial rebels argued that New York was a Tory stronghold that would give the British in the Americas a safe base of operations. The great, natural harbor here would easily serve as a major port for the British fleet. By using Manhattan as a base of operations, finally, the British would enjoy great latitude in deciding where to strike next. They could cross New Jersey and aim at Philadelphia, move up the Hudson, or across Long Island and up into New England. But none of these reasons could balance the problems of defending the area.

In the 1770s, New York City was not yet a sprawling metropolis. The old Dutch settlements at the lower end of Manhattan Island were still the core of the city. Shipping was a major activity, and many new dwellings had gone up around the harbor. Rolling hills, forests and farms dominated the landscape of the central and northern parts of Manhattan.

In addition, New York was belted by two great waterways; the Hudson River, to the west, split the island from New Jersey, while on the opposite side of Manhattan the East River formed a natural boundary with Long Island. Only at the northernmost tip of the island, at Kingsbridge, could a force cross in reasonable safety from island to mainland.

That, in fact, was where Washington was fairly certain the British would try to land a force in order to trap him in New York. And so, with no fleet of his own to contest passage of the two rivers, he would deny Admiral Howe the ability to go up the rivers. To block the Hudson route, two forts were erected—Fort Lee in New Jersey, and directly opposite, on the high ground of Manhattan, Fort Washington. And ships were sunk in the channel between to further hamper navigation.

Despite those efforts, British ships were still able to sail almost anywhere at will. That was graphically illustrated to Washington on July 12, 1776, by two British warships, the *Phoenix*, 44 guns, and the *Rose*, 28 guns. As the two ships swept past on their trip up the river, Patriot batteries on both sides opened up. Keeping close to the center of the channel, both ships ripped out broadsides against the American guns. Driving steadily north against all obstacles intended to have stopped them, the ships continued to pound the American positions. They went all the way to Tappan Bay, 40 miles above the city. The Colonials even tried sending fire-ships after them, all to no avail.

Six days later the two frigates repeated their feat, returning all the way to the Narrows without serious damage. This adventure showed both sides that, weather permitting, the Howe brothers could use the fleet to land troops on the northern end of Manhattan anytime they chose.



Cut off by Grant and Cornwallis, Lord Stirling leads 250 of his Marylanders in an aggressive holding action, while the rest of his men try to escape the British trap. One British opponent remarked that Stirling "fought like a wolf."

but later was rejected by the House of Lords. Nevertheless, he used the title for the remainder of his life.

In the center of the line stood Sullivan, with less than 2,000 men. The remainder were with Putnam at Brooklyn Heights. Roughly three miles past Sullivan's easternmost position was another pass—through Jamaica. Since the British intruders could not "possibly know about it," only five mounted militia members were put out there as a watch. Given the shape of the terrain, it seemed quite possible for the 3,000 to 4,000 Colonials on the heights of Guan to seriously slow down any British advance. After all, the attacks would be funneled by the passes into narrow confines. If the battle went well, reinforcements could be sent down from Brooklyn Heights. If not, the front line could conduct a fighting withdrawal into the earthworks. There was just one problem—General Sir Henry Clinton had discovered the pass at Jamaica!

The British plan of battle has often been credited to Lord Howe, but the true author was Clinton. It was he who first discovered the pass at Jamaica and designed the scheme to make use of it. The concept was simplicity itself and, as events proved, the execution was flawless.

The Imperial forces were to be split into three contingents. The first, about 5,000 men under General John Grant, was to be deployed along the coast road. They would advance and engage the rebels here. In the center, General von Heister would command his 5,000 mercenaries along with units of the Black Watch and some American Loyalists. Neither of these men was expected to eliminate his opposition. Instead, each simply would pin the American defenders in place until the grand design was fully executed.

During the night of August 26, Clinton himself (along with General Howe and Lord Percy) brought the main British force of 10,000 men on a wide flank march aimed at Jamaica Pass. They scooped up the five militiamen stationed there before any alarm could be sounded—and had breakfast in the pass. With the coming of dawn, more elements of the British plan

began to click into motion. In the center, von Heister drew up his Hessians in battle order, sending the Americans scrambling behind their hastily erected barricades. But instead of the full-scale assault the colonials expected, von Heister merely ordered his light troops to skirmish forward.

The first real action of the day was initiated by General Grant along the coastal road. During the night he had moved forward to the Red Lion Inn, where a small rebel picket post had been established. In the pre-dawn melee that ensued, the rebels were tossed out of their position. The firing had alarmed Putnam, and taking his most positive action of the day, he ordered Lord Stirling to take the Maryland and Delaware regiments and secure the coastal road.

Because of the contour of the land, Stirling was forced to draw his line in an inverted V formation. His soldiers were posted on the front of the wooded slope. Unlike other American commanders, he did not let the troops disperse through the woods, but kept them drawn up in battle line out in the open. The right of his line was anchored on a swamp at the foot of the hill, but his left was exposed. As a consequence, he gave General Samuel Parsons about one-third of his available muskets to spread out in the woods along his left flank.

The position was not a good one. To the right was the bay, which was commanded by the British; to the rear were mostly impassable swamps and creeks; to the left was Parson's thinned-out unit; and to the front was General Grant with 5,000 veterans.

For four hours the two armies stood opposite each other. Grant sent in two attacks against Parson's men in the woods, and each was repulsed. Against Stirling's center he pushed light troops and cannon fire. The Americans expected a full-scale attack, but Grant's job was merely to pin Stirling in place.

It does the Americans credit that, although mostly untried and untrained, they stood, in the open for four hours under Grant's cannonading and probing attacks. No help to their nerves, they could hear off to the right the guns of the war-



Having blundered on the battlefield, Washington supervises the withdrawal of his 11,000 remaining troops from Long Island on the night of August 29—a well-executed retreat that keeps his fragile army in the war.

ship Roebuck pounding the American fort at Red Hook with broadside after broadside.

Without a doubt, one reason they maintained high morale was the presence of Stirling himself galloping back and forth across the line. The American "lord" even took the chance to chide Grant a bit. That officer, while a member of the House of Commons, had made the boast that with 5,000 men he could march from one end of the American continent to the other. Stirling had been in the gallery that day and now he reminded everyone of the boast: "He may have 5,000 men with him now. We are not so many. But I think we are enough to prevent his advancing further on his march across the continent than that mill-pond."

While the exchange of cannon shot and insults was going on, Clinton's hidden column was pushing doggedly forward. The British were doing everything possible to move behind the Americans without being observed. Clinton had even seen to it that his troops had brought saws for the trees blocking the march of his guns. The thudding of axes might have drawn the Americans' attention.

At 9:00 o'clock in the morning, rumors were wildly circulating as to why the British had not attacked. Some thought that maybe Washington had pulled a masterstroke and perhaps landed an army behind them. Confidence began to swell the heads of the militiamen crouched behind the earthworks. From Sullivan's positions, crude and obscene remarks began to come forth about the statue-like Hessians on the meadow before them. Then, just slightly past the hour, two signal cannon roared forth a message from behind Sullivan's lines. Not comprehending their import, many of the Americans turned their heads and wondered why their compatriots back there were firing. Von Heister quickly regained their attention.

Before the echoes of the signal guns could fade through the hills, every Hessian gun along the line opened up on the American positions. Barricades, which a moment ago had seemed so secure, were smashed into the dirt as gun after gun

zeroed on the American positions. With the artillery salvos temporarily shocking the Americans, von Heister passed the orders to begin the attack. Line after line of blue-jacketed Hessians swung to the advance.

Clinton's soldiers now unleashed their attack. The Colonials put up a spirited, but brief, defense. Hit from front, flank and rear by superior numbers and firepower, their line was pierced, bent, and then broken. The militia scattered. General Sullivan, himself, was captured by three Hessians after he was cornered in a nearby cornfield. Most of the blame for this disaster was to fall right on Sullivan's head.

It was at this engagement that the Hessians were to earn a reputation that would haunt them through the rest of the war. It was stated by many people who survived the battle that the German troops shot and bayoneted unarmed prisoners. Some survivors claimed they went so far as to impale their victims on trees. Perhaps, but it was also said that many Americans, having thrown down their arms, quickly picked them up again when the Hessians came close and began firing. Whatever the truth, what was left was a reputation for brutality. From this day on the Americans would nurse a special hatred toward these mercenaries of the king.

The Imperial forces now held three out of the four routs across the heights of Guan. Only Lord Stirling's men were left. On the British side, General Grant was quite aware of what the fighting in the center signified as he prepared to launch his attack. He was forced to go in a bit later than planned, through lack of ammunition. For the final assault he was able to muster more than 7,000 men.

Grant threw his full strength straight at the center of Stirling's line, while a force under Cornwallis hit the American left flank and lapped around its rear. The Americans were driven back everywhere by the strength of the attack. When Cornwallis seized the Cortelyou House on the Gowanus Road, Stirling realized he was trapped. With his back to the swamp, it was now only a matter of time . . . but, desperate moments



With the taking of Brooklyn Heights, the fall of New York to General Howe's Redcoats and von Heister's Hessians was a foregone conclusion, but the British commander threw away a golden opportunity to make his Long Island victory a decisive one.

call for desperate measures, and Stirling soon organized the only plan possible. Earlier that day a small detachment had managed to negotiate the swamp. He would send back the majority of his command by this route. A small rear guard would do its best to hold off the British.

Stirling watched as his command began to filter away through the swamp. Satisfied, he then drew up the remainder of the command, some 250 Marylanders. Stirling himself would lead them. For him to escape while brave men were selling their lives went completely against his nature.

Advancing down the road, Stirling's little column soon came under musket and artillery fire from Cornwallis' men. The men wavered and began to fall back, but Stirling urged them forward. Five times the Marylanders surged forward to the attack; five times they were repulsed by the British.

Stirling gathered them together for one last, desperate lunge, but Cornwallis had been reinforced by this time and the sixth charge was the last. The men from Maryland had done more than could be asked of flesh and blood. They broke into small groups and tried to escape. Only 10 made it to safety. The other 256 were either killed or taken prisoner. Stirling himself made a mad dash toward safety, but to no avail. He eventually surrendered his sword to General von Heister. It was only then that he learned of the disaster which had befallen Sullivan and how his force had come to be surrounded.

The Battle of Long Island had been an unmitigated disaster for the Americans. The entire defensive perimeter around Brooklyn Heights was shattered; half the army was dead or deserted, and morale was at an incredible low. Washington now assumed command and ferried in more troops, so that at next daybreak there were 11,000 soldiers on the heights.

Howe did not press his advantage, despite the pressures of every officer around him. Had he driven straight toward the American lines, there is no doubt he could have destroyed the American army in Brooklyn. But Howe decided instead to open siege operations—less blood to be spilled that way.

Washington agonized for two days over whether to stand the siege or try to retreat. At last, convinced there was no hope, he ordered evacuation, a nighttime drama so carefully managed that Howe's men never had an inkling. In the morning, they went forward to find the heights empty. Washington had withdrawn to Manhattan Island and it was there that the next act of the drama would be played out, while Long Island would remain under British occupation for the duration of the war.

On the American side, the major share of the blame for the defeat must lie squarely on Washington's shoulders. As commander, he should have realized sooner that the British were going to make their major effort on Long Island. When he did realize it, he should have moved more troops to Brooklyn and assumed personal command. His awkward command setup was also a great mistake. For the conduct of the battle itself, both Putnam and Sullivan spent many years accusing each other of the great mistakes. In truth, they must both shoulder blame. Both of them were aware of the unguarded pass at Jamaica and it was idiocy to assume that, in this nest of Tories, the British would not soon know also.

In the post-mortem the British come off much better. The major credit for the victory goes to Clinton for initiating and carrying out an excellent plan of battle, but it was Howe's deliberate procrastination that precluded a brilliant ending. Had he attacked the Brooklyn Heights the same day as the battle, or even the next morning, he would have destroyed a major part of the rebel army and captured George Washington. Such a blow might have ended the entire rebellion. Instead, in his desire to gain peace, he threw away the one chance he had to win it all. □

James W. Flanagan writes from Topsham, Maine. Further reading: George Washington's Generals, edited by George Athan Billias; and Decisive Battles of the American Revolution, by Joseph B. Mitchell.

BATTLERS BECALMED

Seeing his commander's flagship hard pressed by several opponents off Barfleur, Admiral Coëtlogon declared, "We'll save this brave man or die with him!" Such attitudes, common to both sides, made the Channel wars a most bloody sideshow.

By Jon Guttman

It was in 1690 that the privateer Jean Bart told King Louis XIV of France how to gain naval supremacy in the English Channel—simply take the fleet based at Toulon and 15 galleys patrolling the nearby Mediterranean waters and combine them with the French warships long based at Brest.

The resulting concentration not only would drive the Anglo-Dutch fleet from the Channel, it very likely would deal Britain a blow as demoralizing as the debacle Bart himself had witnessed in June of 1667. Bart then had been a sailor aboard the flagship of Dutch Admiral Michiel A. de Ruyter when he sailed up Britain's own Thames River and raided the Medway. Now, 23 years later, "the Sun King" agreed to the veteran privateer's plan for a repetition of sorts—and to Bart's enthusiastic suggestion as to the man best qualified to command such an armada. That man was the Count de Tourville.

Born in 1642, Anne Hilarion de Costentin, *Comte de Tourville*, had begun his naval career with the Knights of Malta at the age of 14. His first captain thought little of him when he came aboard—his fair hair, blue eyes and pretty-boy looks seemed better suited for charming ladies at the palace of Versailles than battling Turks in the Mediterranean. The crew in the lower deck promptly christened him "Milk-sop." But a few weeks later, Tourville saw his first action and proved his true mettle. Thereafter, the sneers—and the nickname—vanished.

At age 27, Tourville was captain of a French ship of the line, seeing action at Solebay, Augusta, Palermo, Algiers and Tripoli. At 33, he was commanding a squadron. On June 22, 1690, at the age of 48—and thanks to Bart's suggestion—he was hoisting his pennant aboard the *Soleil Royal* (Royal Sun), the magnificent 98-gun centerpiece of a fleet of 75 ships of the line, six frigates and 20 fireships that sailed out of Brest in the most splendid array of naval power France had ever assembled in one place.

The sea engagements that sporadically took place between the French and the combined fleets of Britain and the Netherlands between 1689 and 1697 constituted a mere sideshow to the War of the League of Augsburg, which was itself the



While mighty men-of-war lie becalmed in Benjamin West's painting *The Destruction of the French Fleet at La Hogue*, 1692, Dutch and French longboat crews try to row their respective warships into range exchange the first shots and cutlass slashes. The big guns would soon join in.





Exiled British King James II watches French warships go up in smoke—along with his hopes for a royal comeback. The former Lord High Admiral could not resist tactlessly remarking to his French hosts, “Who but brave English tars could do such a thing?”

consequence of one of French King Louis XIV's many violations of the balance of power in Europe. On September 30, 1681, Louis' army had seized the city of Strasburg from the German Empire and, on the same day, the Sun King had bought the Italian city of Casale from the Duke of Mantua. Unable to oppose the French alone, German Emperor Leopold I commenced a series of negotiations that resulted in the signing on July 9, 1686, of a secret compact among the emperor, the kings of Sweden and Spain, and the princes of several German principalities—all together known as the League of Augsburg. The alliance did not remain secret for long and Louis, anticipating its ultimate plan, declared war on the German Empire on September 24, 1688. He immediately sent his armies marching toward the Rhine.

While France was thus occupied, an event of momentous importance was taking place to her west. On November 15, 1688, a Dutch fleet landed Prince William of Orange and his English wife, Mary, at Torbay, England, to set in motion the overthrow of Mary's father, James II, the Catholic Stuart king of England. With his coronation as King William III on April 21, 1689, the Prince of Orange reversed decades of bloody maritime rivalry between Britain and its native Dutch United Provinces, thus joining the two sea powers against what he regarded as the greatest threat to both countries: France.

Meanwhile, in January 1689, James Stuart had fled to Catholic France, which continued to recognize him as the rightful king—tantamount in itself to a declaration of war against King William. Louis XIV expected to eliminate England as an enemy by restoring James to the throne—consequently, he was to devote a great amount of time and ships to that goal.

In March 1689 James landed in Ireland, where he was warmly received except in the Protestant North. He established a capital in Dublin, and on May 9 the first 3,000 reinforcements were being ferried to him at Bantry Bay by the French when they were intercepted by 19 British ships of the line and eight smaller warships under the command of England's Admiral Torrington. The escorting French squadron fought so fiercely, the British withdrew after four hours, with two ships disabled and casualties double those suffered by the French.

Although the French fleet had won the first round, it failed to prevent the transport of British troops to Londonderry and Carrickfergus by Admiral Sir George Rooke, who was also able to blockade Ireland and James from any sea contact from Scotland and its many Stuart sympathizers. After an attempt to burn shipping in Dublin harbor that was foiled only by lack of wind, Rooke landed an occupying force on an island commanding the harbor of Cork.

Louis XIV's response to Rooke's raid was to concentrate on luring the allied British and Dutch fleets into a decisive battle that would allow his more powerful naval forces to destroy both enemy fleets in one master stroke.

Now, in June 1690, a drop in the wind becalmed Tourville's force for three days, thus preventing him from interfering with the landing of King William and a British expeditionary force at Carrickfergus from 288 ships, escorted by only six warships. After reaching and patrolling along the English coast, however, Tourville found what he was looking for on July 8—58 English and Dutch ships at anchor off Beachy Head near Revensey (called Bézévières by the French).

Although surprised to learn of the arrival of the French, England's Admiral Arthur Herbert, Viscount Torrington, was

keen enough for a fight to override the entreaties of his Dutch commanders that he await reinforcements. In fact, while the French spent two days dragging their anchors against a light, adverse wind, Torrington had the time to prepare himself, and on July 10, exploiting his advantage in wind and current, he came out to do battle.

Tourville was by then ready and waiting, too, with his three squadrons hove to in battle order. Aboard the 72-gun *Hollandia*, the commander of the Dutch squadron, Lieutenant-Admiral Cornelis Evertsen the Younger, lived up to his nickname of "*Keesje de Duivel* (Keesje the Devil)" by rashly forging far ahead of the British and plunging full tilt among the leading French ships. A murderous close-range cannon duel ensued, with the *Dauphin Royal*, flagship of squadron commander Francois Louis Rousselet, Marquis de Chateau-Renault, receiving special attention. Just astern of her, the *Ardent* was knocked out of action.

Even so, the French van and Tourville's main body worked their way around the Dutch line and caught it in a devastating cross fire. Attacked from two sides, the Dutch *Vriesland* had 230 men killed or wounded when ordered to surrender, but her captain, Philips van der Goes, refused to strike his colors while he had a gun left to fire. When she finally was taken, the officer in charge of the prize crew reported, "There was not a foot of space above the waterline that had not been hit, and the deck was strewn with dead and dying."

For most of that time, the rest of Torrington's fleet was out of range and unable to help the Dutch. When it finally arrived, it was given a suitably warm reception by the French. Admiral Sir John Ashby's flagship, HMS *Sandwich*, was so badly chewed up by *Soleil Royal* that Ashby had to sheer off. The French *Tonnant* was temporarily disabled, but so were four dismasted British warships that had to abandon the fight.

While this was going on, Torrington, unwilling to pit his ships of the line against Tourville's, led his main body against the weaker ships of the French rear, none of which carried more than 60 guns. But the crews of the *Content*, *Entreprenant* and *Apollon* fought their guns with unmatched speed, efficiency and courage, while the *Fougueux* brought her 58 guns to bear with such deadly accuracy that she forced Torrington's flagship, *Royal Sovereign*, to disengage. Nor that the British gun crews were remiss in their duties—the French ship *Terrible* had half of her stern blown away.

Elsewhere, Torrington's Blue Squadron, commanded by Admiral Sir Ralph Delaval, attacked a French division under Admiral Jean Gabaret, only to see two Blue Squadron ships dismantled and a 90-gun three-decker repulsed by the aptly named French *Vaillant* (Valiant), which had only 48 guns.

Thus far, all had gone well for Tourville, and he was confident that he could annihilate the Dutch and possibly deal a decisive blow to the British. British Admiral Torrington then signaled a withdrawal and ordered his boats out to tow his cripples to safety. Just then, the wind and tide turned against the French, causing them to drift away from the British warships that, upon Torrington's timely order, had dropped their anchors.

Too late to do more, Tourville dispatched a corvette with his combat report: "The enemy has fled, having sent up his pinnaces to tow his ships away, leaving ten disabled vessels which we could take if there were a breath of wind. We have captured one ship, dismantled eleven, sunk two, and three fireships, and sunk a fourth fireship that was bearing down on us."

That night, the burning *Gekroond Burcht*, flagship of Vice Adm. Karel van de Putte, cast an eerie glow over the scene, while another Dutch warship, the *Noord Quartier*, went down.

Over the next two days, while Torrington's fleet found shelter, the French continued their pursuit of the battered Dutch. The *Wapen van Utrecht* and *Tholen* were overtaken and sunk. Four additional ships of the line and a fireship were forced



The French admiral le Comte de Tourville became the hero of La Hougue for his skill and courage against heavy odds and the restraints imposed on him by his own king's instructions.

aground, to be destroyed by their crews to prevent their capture. When the remains of the Dutch van finally reached the shelter of Dover harbor, its number had been reduced by a total of 17 ships. The French had not lost one.

Tourville's victory off Beachy Head was won mainly at the expense of the Dutch and thus was a cause for great indignation in the United Provinces. King William imprisoned Torrington in the Tower of London for several months, and then had him court-martialed at Sheerness on November 10, 1690. Although Torrington was acquitted, William III dismissed him from further military service.

In England, the Trained Bands were mustered to face an expected French invasion, but several weeks of bad weather and scurvy accomplished what the Royal Navy could not. Tourville had to return to Brest to put ashore 6,000 sick crewmen, after having already released 2,800 in Norman ports along the way—in sum, he lost one-third of his force.

Nor had other recent events really advanced the restoration of James II to the English throne, for on July 11, while the Battle of Beachy Head was in its second day, James' army was decisively beaten at Ireland's River Boyne and he was forced once more into French exile.

Over the next year, while healthy commerce overseas allowed the British and Dutch to make good their losses, Tourville wanted to let their navies come to him, but Louis XIV's new war minister, Louis, Comte de Pontchartrain, had other ideas. He wanted the French fleet to "maintain our sense of superiority" in the Channel. Impatient to conclude the Channel war so he could concentrate on his Continental war against the League of Augsburg, Louis XIV again turned to



With *Soleil Royal* in the very epicenter of the battle off *Barfleur*, Tourville calmly directs the maneuvers of his fleet even while his flagship takes on several British opponents.

James, whose hopes of regaining his crown waxed anew with a proposal to land in the south of England. James' rationale was based on the probability that many Royal Navy officers, who had served under him when he had been Duke of York and Lord High Admiral, might retain a personal loyalty to him. Among them was Torrington's successor as commander-in-chief, Admiral Sir Edward Russell. Queen Mary in fact decided it prudent to summon him and his senior officers to London to sign an address of loyalty to her as their English-born sovereign.

On May 12, 1692, while James and a French invasion force commanded by Marshal Bernardin Gigault, Marquis de Bellefonds, camped at St. Vaast-la-Hougue on the east coast of the Cherbourg Peninsula, Count Tourville was ordered to sea to secure them a safe passage. He left Brest with only 39 ships. Five ships from a squadron out of Rochefort would bring his total strength to 44.

Far more limiting than his numbers were the orders Tourville received, with the king's seal on them: "Should he meet with enemy ships he is to chase them back to their ports, whatever number they may be. . . His Majesty desires him to engage them and to persevere, so that even should he be at a disadvantage the enemy is unable to prevent the landing."

While Tourville went forth and beat against the wind for three days, England's Admiral Russell was leading 63 British ships into the Channel. He was joined by Admiral Philips Van Almonde aboard the 92-gun *Prins*, at the head of 35 Dutch warships, bringing total Allied strength up to 99 warships against Tourville's 44; 6,756 guns to the Frenchman's 3,240; and 53,463 men against 20,900.

On May 27, the wind shifted southwest and the French fleet made better progress. At daybreak on May 29 two of Tourville's frigates, *Perle* and *Henry*, were scouting beyond the Cherbourg Peninsula when they encountered Admiral Russell's fleet about seven leagues northeast of Barfleur Point. Breaking off contact, they hurried back to alert Tourville by

signal flag and gunfire. At the same time, however, Tourville's own fleet was discovered by the British frigates *Chester* and *Charles Galley*, which reported forthwith to Russell.

Russell deployed his ships in line north to south, with Van Almonde's White Squadron making up the van, followed by the Red Squadron under Russell's direct command, seconded by Vice Adm. Sir Ralph Delaval and Rear Adm. Sir Cloudesley Shovel. The "Red" main body comprised 31 ships in three divisions. And in the rear were the 32 ships of the Blue Squadron under Admiral Sir John Ashby, Vice Adm. Sir George Rooke and Rear Adm. Richard Carter.

The French, too, were deployed in three squadrons of three divisions each, line-abreast. To the north was the Blue Squadron with 14 ships under Jean Gabaret, in the center Tourville himself led the White with 16 ships, and to its south sailed the Blue-and-White with 14 ships under Francois David, Marquis d'Amfreville.

With a faint southwest wind in his favor, Tourville had the option of slowly approaching this overwhelming enemy force or dropping anchor and refusing combat. But his royal orders had left him no such option. Keeping his ships in close formation, Tourville aimed his flagship directly at Russell's *Britannia*, hoping to achieve the miracle he needed by eliminating the flagship of the Allied force.

Just as the opposing fleets approached their respective cannon ranges, the wind died, leaving them embarrassingly becalmed "within musket-shot of each other," as one veteran observed. The French *Foudroyant* lowered a pinnace, whose crew strained at its oars to tow their ship into battle. Crews from other ships followed suit, and soon the first fighting broke out between the small craft of the opposing fleets.

Thus far, neither commander had given the order to open fire—nor was either one destined to. The first broadside was fired at the French *St. Louis* at extreme range by a nervous Dutch crew; seconds later both battle lines commenced firing.

Tourville's only hope now lay in the close cooperation of his subordinates, and he got it. When a dangerous gap developed between his van and main body, the commander of the Blue-and-White Squadron, the Marquis d'Amfreville aboard the *Merveilleux*, took a few of his ships and filled it. When the Dutch tried to encircle the French right, the *Bourbon* held them up until the 92-gun *Monarque*, flagship of Admiral André Nesmond, and three other ships of his division could arrive to "double" around Van Almonde's own flank.

In the center of the melee, *Soleil Royal* came under attack from three sides, by *Britannia*, *London* and *St. Andrew*, each of which mounted 100 guns. Having been herself up-gunned to 106 cannon, Tourville's flagship fought off several attempts by the British to board her and twice forced them to break off action. Simultaneously, the French admiral directed the ship's defense and the maneuvers of his fleet. At 1:00 p.m., *Soleil Royal* was still in fighting condition, but her rigging was badly torn and Tourville ordered her towed clear of the fight by his oarsmen so that repairs could be made. With a brisk wind now coming in from north-northwest, d'Amfreville led five ships to take *Soleil Royal's* place and keep up the pressure against Russell's main body.

That same wind shift allowed the Englishman Ashby's Blue Squadron to drive into the French left wing, cutting off the three ships of Admiral Francois Panitié's division from the French line. Panitié wisely withdrew to the southwest rather than be drawn into an impossible fight and had the satisfaction of seeing Ashby unwisely following him with all 32 ships—thereby taking considerable pressure off Tourville.

Even so, by 4:00 p.m. Russell's force had encircled the French, whose attack on his center now took on a desperate intensity. The little frigate *Perle* under Captain Claude Gardanne, Chevalier de Forbin, lost a third of her crew battling enemy ships of the line. True to her name, *Ambitieux*



A Dutch depiction of the furious action off Barfleur. In contrast to the Allies' earlier defeat off Beachy Head, the Dutch squadron under Admiral Philips Van Almonde did not bear the brunt of Tourville's onslaught, and its casualties were relatively light.

took on—and badly battered—Sir Ralph Delaval's *Royal Sovereign*, while the frigate *HMS Chester* withdrew with her sails and rigging in tatters and *HMS Eagle* backed off with her bowsprit and foremast shattered, along with 70 of her crew dead and twice as many wounded.

On the French side, *Henry* and *Fort* were disabled and had to be towed out of line by their boats. Back in the fray again, *Soleil Royal* was hard pressed, but Tourville's plight was noticed by Admiral Alain Emmanuel, Marquis de Coëtlogon, aboard *Magnifique*, who declared, "We'll save this brave man or die with him!" *Magnifique* and *Prince* left formation to assist the flagship, their places in line quickly taken by other French vessels.

Soleil Royal's position was still critical. Sir Cloudesley Shovel had worked his Red Squadron around her when a thick mist shrouded the Channel waters, rendering visibility almost nil and giving Tourville a needed respite. When the wind picked up and cleared the mist, the tide also turned, so that when Tourville's ships dropped anchor, the majority of their opponents were drawn eastward. Ashby, however, was still to the west of the French, and his ships also dropped anchor, thus keeping Tourville's main body caught between the English Blue Squadron and the Allied main body.

But again the wind shifted, this time to the northeast, and Russell resorted to his fireships. Five were sent bearing down on *Soleil Royal*, but by adroit maneuvering and with the help of her small boats, she managed to avoid them all. *Ambitieux* also dodged three of the burning juggernauts.

As darkness fell, the British began drawing off to the east—first the Red Squadron, and then Van Almonde's Dutchmen. Farther to the west, Ashby's ships had to sail with the current through gaps in the French line, thus running a gauntlet of muskets and cannon. His flagship, the *Royal William*, took successive broadsides in turn from *Soleil Royal*, *Magnifique* and *St. Philippe*, and was disabled. Rear Admiral Carter, aboard the *Duke*, was mortally wounded in the deadly cross fire, as was *Duke*'s captain soon after.

As night finally brought 15 hours of battle to an end, all 44 of Tourville's ships were still afloat, although *Soleil Royal* was battered and leaking, her decks awash with blood. The French had lost 1,700 dead or wounded. The British had taken the greater damage, however, with a score of ships having to be towed to English ports, too badly holed to conduct repairs at sea. The Dutch got off the more lightly this time because they were not as closely engaged as the British; their worst hit vessel, the *Zeven Provinciën*, had lost only 19 men dead and 14 wounded. Total Anglo-Dutch losses came to 2,000 dead—including two admirals—and 3,000 wounded.

Up to this point, Tourville had exceeded even his own wildest hopes. He had carried out his king's orders to the letter by inflicting a stinging defeat on an enemy force more than double the size of his own. Even an English chronicler of the time admitted that, "Had Barfleur had no morrow, the action would have been a French triumph."

But the morrow was indeed coming, and seamen on both sides were given little rest as they shored up holes and sealed broken seams with oakum and melted pitch, while topside, masts, rigging and sails were also being repaired.

Tourville's force was far from the shelter of any fortified French ports—Cherbourg and Le Havre still had yet to be developed to accommodate a fleet such as his—and, despite its losses, the Allied fleet still outnumbered him. Exploiting a thick mist that aided his withdrawal in the night, Tourville ordered his units to retire westward. Nine French ships became separated from the main body in the darkness, but under Admiral Nesmond's command they eventually found safe havens at La Hougue, Le Havre and Brest. The next morning the receding mist revealed the 35 vessels still in Tourville's formation to Van Almonde's White Squadron. The Dutch relayed the news to Admiral Russell, who ordered his ships to resume pursuit. A wind shift from northeast to southwest at the end of the morning again slowed the chase, and by 4:00 p.m. both fleets were anchoring off Cherbourg to keep from losing headway in the ebb tide.



Beached near Cherbourg, *Soleil Royal* is evacuated on May 31. Hopes of salvaging the pride of Louis XIV's fleet were dashed by British fireships later that same day.

Although he was about two miles ahead of the Dutch van, Tourville's unwillingness to abandon the wounded *Soleil Royal* hindered progress for the rest of his fleet. During that night, the 22 ships of Tourville's van, now led by Panité aboard the *Grand*, broke away and sailed south, between the Cherbourg Peninsula and the Channel Islands, to make safe anchorage at St. Malo.

Sometime after midnight, Admiral Russell's flagship, *Britannia*, lost her foremast, which had been damaged in the earlier battle, and she dropped out of line. Ashby's and Van Almonde's squadrons continued after Tourville's main force, closing the distance between them, thanks to the painfully slow progress being made by the *Soleil Royal*. West of Alderney, the French ships missed the tide and then lost their anchors, which left the more damaged among them almost helpless. Reluctantly, Admiral Tourville transferred his flag to the *Ambitieux*, and soon after, *Soleil Royal*, *Triomphant* and *Admirable* all ran aground in quick succession near Cherbourg.

The morning of May 31 found Tourville's remaining 12 ships anchored off St. Vaast-la-Hougue, seeking the protection of a few shore batteries and James' army. Back at Cherbourg, meanwhile, Sir Ralph Delaval's division came upon the three beached men-of-war and attempted to finish them off, only to be driven back by *Soleil Royal*'s gunners and the six cannon of a local makeshift fort. Changing tactics, Delaval ordered his boats lowered to escort four fireships against the stranded but still dangerous warships. One of the fireships was blown up and a second struck a reef, but two got through the maelstrom of cannon fire. Captain Thomas Heath sailed HMS *Blaze* up to the towering *Soleil Royal* and managed to secure his fireship to her stern. Moments later, the pride of the Sun King's fleet was enshrouded in flames that soon found their way to her still amply stocked magazine. The resulting explosion tossed many of her crew skyward. In like manner, the fireship *Wolf* destroyed the *Triomphant*, while the

crews of the small boats managed to set *Admirable* ablaze as well.

In the meantime, Russell had taken position off La Hougue, where Tourville was moored. Tourville's instructions now placed him at the disposal of the awaiting James and Marshal Bellefonds. After discussion, it was decided on June 1 to beach six of Tourville's ships behind La Hougue and the other six at the neighboring islet of Tatihou, then quickly unload them of all useful material and cargo.

Early on the morning of June 2, Vice Adm. Rooke resorted to Delaval's tactic of launching an attack by fireships and longboats. Virtually no support was given the stranded warships by the garrison on Tatihou, nor from the French army at nearby St. Vaast, from which James and Bellefonds watched the six vessels burn.

Tourville and his naval officers, disgusted by the army's lack of initiative, took the defense of the last six ships at La Hougue into their own hands. When Rooke's fireships and boats came at them the next morning, the French seamen threw them back while a gun hurriedly mounted on a barbette sank several boats and killed a number of their crews. But the British numbers prevailed, and soon their fireships were sending the last six ships of Tourville's division—and his triumph at Barfleur—up in smoke. With the Channel now completely theirs, the

Allied ships then laid into the French transport vessels, burning several before the turn of the tide forced them to retire.

The battle of La Hougue often is cited as the decisive naval action of the war. From the material standpoint, it was no such thing—the 15 French ships destroyed there barely made up for the losses they had inflicted on the Allies at Beachy Head. As events turned out, too, Louis XIV was relieved to learn that his greatest admiral had escaped alive from the debacle, exclaiming, "More ships can be found, but not another Tourville." In addition, Admiral Russell wrote a letter to his antagonist, graciously complimenting him "on the great valour he had shown by attacking in such a dauntless manner, and by fighting so valiantly although having an unequal force." What actually made La Hougue a French fiasco was that it occurred where it did, in plain sight of the awaiting invasion force and French civilians in the vicinity. In the aftermath, James Stuart made no further attempts to invade England. The War of the League of Augsburg continued for another five years, during which the French navy engaged mainly in commerce raiding.

The peace treaty subsequently signed at Ryswick in 1697 was disadvantageous to France, Louis XIV losing most of his gains of the past 20 years, with the important exception of Strasbourg. Among his concessions was the recognition of William III as King of England. The Sun King's ambitions were far from being squelched, nor had the Royal Navy by any means faced its last challenge from the French fleet. But it might fairly be said that never again would the French come so tantalizingly close to victory over the British at sea as they did when Tourville led them to Beachy Head, Barfleur and La Hougue. □

Jon Gutman is research director and a senior editor at Empire Press. Further reading: 25 Centuries of Sea Warfare, by Jacques Mordal (Abbey Library, London, 1970); The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1805, by Alfred Thayer Mahan.

The Battle of Waterloo



By Félix Philippoteaux

One of the most spectacular phases of the Battle of Waterloo was the French cavalry attack on the Duke of Wellington's center. The moment lives on in the breathtaking portrayal by Félix Philippoteaux, one of the greatest "epic" painters of all time.

At 3:30, on the afternoon of June 18, 1815, following the failure of Napoleon's initial attack on the Allied center, Lord Wellington began to regroup, moving casualties to the rear and readjusting his line. Observing the British infantry withdrawing over the ridge to find shelter from Napoleon's artillery, Marshal Michel Ney misinterpreted it as a sign that the British were retiring, and personally led his heavy cavalry in for the kill.

At 4:00, about 5,000 French horsemen charged across the valley, at the same time being channeled into a narrow, 700-yard area between la Haye Sainte and Hougomont. As they crested the opposite slope, beyond the ability of their artillery to support them, the French cavalrymen found themselves galloping into a checkerboard formation of squares, each one a bristling phalanx of bayonets against which their horses refused to throw themselves. Unable to recall what he realized to be a premature attack, Napoleon committed more cavalry squadrons to its support in a desperate but ultimately fruitless effort to break Wellington's center. After a dozen charges involving a total of 10,000 horse, Ney withdrew what was

left of the once-proud cavalry from the field. The Allied center had weathered the storm.

In Philippoteaux's painting, Count Milhaud's French *cuirassiers* try vainly to break up a square of Highlanders—while musket fire thins their ranks. Dead and wounded pile up in the wet meadow, which will soon be churned into a muddy quagmire by the thousands of hooves, further impeding the assaults to follow.

The original painting hangs in Apsley House, the London home of Lord Wellington. New, this dramatic epic painting is being published in conjunction with the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, institutional curator of the Wellington home and its contents.

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BEYOND CHIVALRY'S CODE

Hanging upon the outcome at Bouvines was the fate of a nation whose outnumbered army could only be considered the underdog in this battle.

By Eric Niderost

On the morning of July 27, 1214, King Philip II "Augustus" of France halted his army at the little Flanders village of Bouvines—an insignificant cluster of peasant cottages grouped around a stone church, with a bridge spanning the nearby Marq River and trees that offered promise of shade on a summer's day. Here was a perfect spot to rest and water both man and beast.

Philip dismounted, held a hurried council of war, and then decided it was high time to get some rest himself. Wandering over to an ash tree, he stretched out beneath its sheltering limbs.

Philip on the surface radiated calm, but the fact was that he faced the supreme test of his career. A ruler since the age of 15, Philip had weathered countless storms in the past 34 years, and somehow he had always managed to bring the French ship of state into safe harbor. This time, though, the situation was different. The multinational coalition now arrayed against him included the most powerful magnates in Europe. In a few hours, maybe less, the French king would be engaging the combined army of Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV and a host of Flemish, German and English princelings. If Philip met defeat today, his Capetian dynasty would cease to rule and he would face imprisonment, exile or even death. Worse still, his beloved kingdom of France would be dismembered, the body politic torn limb from limb by a pack of foreign wolves.

When Philip Augustus became king in 1180, that same kingdom was more theory than reality. In the high Middle Ages, nationalism was embryonic at best. Feudalism—land tenancy based on mutual loyalty between serf and lord, a personal obligation—was deeply entrenched. In feudal theory, the king



owned all French soil, but he parceled it out to favored underlings—called vassals—in return for services that were usually military in nature.

That was the theory. In practice, the monarch ruled little more than the environs of his Parisian capital. And the Paris region, called the "Isle de France," was an island indeed—a scrap of land surrounded by a sea of enemies. To the east loomed the Holy Roman Empire, more or less today's Germany together with a generous slice of northern Italy. Though basically Germanic, the Holy Roman Emperors considered themselves heirs of ancient Rome and looked askance at any power that might challenge their dominance.

But to the west and south were the lands of Philip's true enemies, the Plantagenets of England. At its apogee, the Angevin Empire (so called because the Plantagenets originally hailed from French Anjou) encompassed not only England

An illustration from a 13th-century Polish Bible typically represents its subjects in contemporary armor, and would be more applicable to the combatants at Bouvines in 1214—particularly the German knights of Emperor Otto IV—than of King David of Israel and his foes.



but the Gallic provinces of Normandy, Poitou, Anjou and Aquitaine—about half of today's France.

On paper—or, perhaps, parchment—the kings of England were vassals of the French throne, but the Plantagenets gave only lip service to their feudal obligations. It became Philip's lifelong quest to strengthen the monarchy by bringing his vassals to heel—and in so doing, to regain full control of France's "lost provinces." For the first 20 years of his reign, Philip Augustus matched wits and traded blows with a succession of English monarchs; first Henry II, and then his sons Richard I the Lion-Hearted and John.

It was the last-named monarch—an able man but flawed in judgment and character—who gave Philip Augustus his opening. England's King John stumbled into war with the wily Frenchman, and thanks to Philip's brilliant maneuvering and John's ineptitude, Normandy was added to the French

crown in 1204. Within the next two years, Philip Augustus had annexed Anjou, Maine, Touraine and Poitou. It seemed nothing could stop his triumphant progress.

The French king's chaplain dubbed him Philip "Augustus" because his patient statesmanship was reminiscent of the ancient Roman emperor. (Oddly enough, the nickname gained no currency during Philip's own Middle Ages, even if modern scholars often use this flattering epithet.) But French rejoicing was premature. King John of England was only down, not out. With the Angevin Empire shrinking, the House of Plantagenet was collapsing around the English monarch's ears; the crisis, curiously, was like a tonic to John. An inveterate schemer, the English king resolved to win back what had been so "rudely" wrenched away.

John's devious mind began to search for allies who might nip the blooming Gallic flower in the bud. The Counts of



While far from being a disciplined clash of arms, the Battle of Bouvines roughly involved three phases. First, Bishop-elect Guérin assaulted Count Ferrand's Flemish force; then, Emperor Otto launched a concerted assault against the French center. After that threat was averted, a renewed French effort against the Allied right flank completed Philip Augustus' greatest victory.

Boulogne and Flanders, who ruled feudal enclaves to the north, feared France's growing power and were easy to enlist in John's cause. Soon other feudal magnates also joined, but John scored a real *coup* when he persuaded his nephew, Emperor Otto IV, that France was becoming dangerous.

As events unfolded, it was decided King John would attack Philip Augustus from the southwest while Emperor Otto's combined army would advance from the north. Eventually, the armies would meet, two great grindstones that would crush Philip's forces to powder between them.

Luckily for France, John's carefully woven two-front invasion plans began to unravel. King John inaugurated the campaign by landing at La Rochelle in the south of France with a large army. Significantly, though, few of his major Anglo-Norman barons accompanied him—a sure sign that English support was lukewarm.

After spending weeks trying to enlist the aid of the local French nobility—a task only partly realized—John probed northward into the strategic Loire Valley. The English king easily took the city of Angers, because its walls were in a sad state of repair, but then came other places far more formidable. John began to besiege the castle of La Roche-au-Moine, but that rock (*roche*) was placed so securely in the English ruler's path it caused him to stumble and fall.

The French garrison of La Roche-au-Moine took a heavy toll of the attackers. Then it was learned that a large French relief army under Philip's son Louis was approaching. When the local French nobility balked at the idea of fighting their own countrymen, John saw treason and betrayal all around him. Something akin to fear began to cloud his mind, and at length he resolved to flee. Abandoning tents, baggage, engines and courage, the English king scurried back to La Rochelle on the coast as fast as lathered horses could take him. At one point during the hurried exodus, it was said, John rode a full 20 miles without stopping.

Despite King John's fiasco, Philip Augustus could take small comfort in his enemy's ignoble retreat. The Capetian knew a large English-allied army was even now assembling in Flanders—roughly, today's Belgium—under Emperor Otto IV. The French king was backing a rival candidate for the imperial throne, a young gadfly named Frederick of Hohenstaufen. That alone might not have been a sufficient cause for war, but it was unlikely to endear Philip Augustus to Otto. More generally, of course, Otto and his cronies wanted nothing less than the partition of the French king's entire domain.

Resolute in the face of this danger to life and throne, Philip Augustus mustered his army at Péronne, a town on the Somme River between Paris and Flanders. Instead of waiting for an invasion, he had decided to go meet the enemy.

Marching northward, Philip Augustus entered the French-allied Flemish city of Tournai July 26, 1214, but he had over-shot his mark—Otto's army was in the Gallic rear! If the intruder's allies could come up quickly enough, Philip Augustus might be cut off from France and bottled up in Tournai. Siege, starvation and surrender might follow.

After some deliberations with his entourage, the king decided to retrace his steps and withdraw south to the city of Lille. The French would then avoid entrapment—and with luck might even be able to lure the enemy onto ground of Philip's own choosing. Thus, with everything planned, the French army left Tournai on the morning of July 27, a clattering cavalcade of mounted knights and foot-slogging men-at-arms. By midmorning, the Gallic host was well on its way—but the allies were coming up, too.

Philip Augustus decreed a halt when the French reached Bouvines. Aside from the obvious advantages of good water and tree-shaded shelter from the blazing sun, the Bouvines region seemed ordained by nature to be a superb battlefield. It was on the edge of a plateau, where the ground dipped to



King Philip II's knights reaffirm their loyalty to him before the Battle of Bouvines in Horace Vernet's romanticized painting. In actuality, 49-year-old Philip was paunchy and balding, but proved to have courage as well as determination.

meet the meandering Marq River. The future battlefield was flat, ideal for cavalry maneuvers, save for a dip in the terrain near the old Roman road to Tournai. The soil was chalky, with poor drainage, so that swamps and marshes straddled the Marq, augmented in spots by clusters of trees.

There was still a problem—July 27 was a Sunday, and shedding blood on the Sabbath was a terrible sin in the pious Middle Ages. In such an age of faith, no one, be he prince or peasant, wished to incur God's wrath by profaning the divine day of rest. When the French rear guard spied the enemy army, a lively debate erupted among the king and his lords. Many nobles took a conservative tack and advised against battle—for all their bravery, they feared divine retribution.

Luckily for the French cause, other voices were heard that scorned such caution. Brother Guérin, the Bishop-elect of Senlis, urged Philip Augustus to meet the enemy regardless of the calendar. Guérin was a warrior-prelate, curious in modern eyes, but a type common enough in the Middle Ages. Nor was he the only churchman commanding troops with the French army that day—the Archbishop of Rheims, the Bishop of Leon and the Bishop of Beauvais were also present.

Philip Augustus wasn't a very inspiring sight as he took his ease under the ash tree near the village church. At 49, the king was bald and somewhat overweight. With his paunch, bald pate and one blind eye, he was not the conventional image of a medieval king so beloved of poets and minstrels. In an age that worshipped the bluster and brawn of such warrior-heroes as Richard the Lion-Hearted, Philip Augustus was a curious figure, an anomaly. Yet it could be truly said that Philip saw more with his one eye than most contemporaries saw with two. A master politician, ruthless and efficient, he was a man of inner substance, not surface show.

Rousing himself from his tree-shaded reverie, the so-ordinary-looking French king soon enough summoned his entourage, embraced his close associates, and then repaired to the village church of St. Peter's for a moment of prayer and meditation. The monarch's actions spoke louder than words—he was in effect declaring that a true battle, a *bellum*, was about to be fought.

In the main, medieval warfare was defensive; it revolved around raids and castle sieges. Objectives were limited and relatively bloodless. This chesslike game of maneuver and siege was designated *querre* by medieval theorists. *Bellum*, a pitched battle, was outside the rules of chivalry and the knightly code. That Philip Augustus would even contemplate *bellum* showed the gravity of the situation. He emerged from the church and girded himself for battle. After donning his armor and mounting his horse, he proudly went forth.

His foot soldiers, sent toward Lille earlier, were recalled in time to participate in the coming battle. Far more important, they brought the oriflamme, the sacred banner of the Abbey of St. Denis that was considered the very symbol of France incarnate. The bright-red banner ended in saw-toothed points, and each point was decorated with a tassel. For two centuries the oriflamme was a scarlet talisman of victory, and no doubt its timely arrival boosted morale.

By now, the allied army was in full view, lined up in positions not more than 200 yards away. Masses of armored warriors clustered around their lords, and colorful heraldic banners pierced the sky. It seemed that most of feudal Europe was arrayed against Philip Augustus. Heading the list, of course, was Otto IV of Germany, followed by Count Ferrand of Flanders, Count William of Holland, Duke Theobald of Lorraine, the French turncoat Count Renaud (some call him Reginald) of Boulogne, and a host of lesser feudal lights. An English contingent was led by William "Longsword," the Earl of Salisbury. A good soldier, Salisbury was the bastard son of King Henry II—and so, King John's half brother.

The coalition's left was formed by Count Ferrand's Flemish knights and foot soldiers, while the right consisted of the traitor Count Renaud's troops and the English soldiers under Salisbury. But it was the allied center that held probably the most formidable threat. Otto himself commanded there, a bluff, unimaginative—some said stupid—man who was a warrior very much in the mold of his late uncle, Richard the Lion-Hearted. Otto was surrounded by a handpicked group of German knights, and to his front German infantry added bulk and weight to the center.



A typical French knight of the early 13th century sallies forth on a chivalric mission, his heraldic tunic providing a brighter image than his chain mail—the “knight in shining armor” would have to await the later introduction of plate armor.

Otto's imperial standard floated nearby, a flag emblazoned with an eagle surmounted by a writhing dragon. The banner was fixed to a tall pole, and the whole ensemble was transported in a lumbering four-wheel cart or “chariot.” It was a symbol as unsubtle as the monarch it represented.

On the French side, Philip's dispositions revealed a latent military intelligence. The French left wing was jointly commanded by two royal cousins, Count Robert of Deux and Bishop Philippe of Beauvais, a mixture of the “sacred” and the “profane” so curious and yet so typical of the age. More important, the left commanded the high ground, a distinct disadvantage to any charging enemy knights. The French right, also anchored on high ground, was a mixture of troops and knights under Bishop-elect Guérin and the Duke of Burgundy. The center, commanded by the French king himself, was on lower ground than the well-secured flanks, but this apparent disadvantage was offset by the presence of Philip's own elite household troops at that position.

The king himself awaited events beneath the colorful folds of his own personal banner, a blue flag speckled with golden fleurs-de-lis, the perennial emblem of the French monarchy.

Chroniclers state the French army had its collective back to the sun, an advantage, but its back was also to the Marq River. To underscore the desperate, do-or-die nature of the coming clash, Philip Augustus had ordered the river bridge destroyed. The French king figuratively—even literally—burned his bridges. No retreat was possible.

In 1214, there was no “knight in shining armor.” Those warriors, encased in plate from head to foot, were almost 200 years into the future. Philip's was still the age of chain mail, little

iron links melded together to form “coats.” For additional protection some knights wore iron caps or helmets.

Since mail hauberks were almost universally worn by the knightly classes, a means had to be made to distinguish friend from foe. At Bouvines probably a few knights wore surcoats, sleeveless gowns worn over hauberks and emblazoned with their owners' coats of arms. The knights' kite-shaped shields were also decorated with heraldic designs, while brightly colored banners also provided means of identification during the heat of battle. As to weapons, broadswords, lances and axes were the usual arms of choice.

Although they lacked the gaudy panoply of their betters, the foot soldiers of both sides were armed just as lethally. First, there was the halberd, a combination spear and battle-ax fitted with a hook to drag the opposing knights from their saddles—these halberds would prove their worth in the coming fight. And then there was the sword-dagger, quite possibly a variation of the sax (or seax), an old Saxon short sword.

The battle opened when Bishop-elect Guérin launched French cavalry against Count Ferrand's Flemings of the coalition's left wing. It was well past noon, actually, and the sun, having reached its burning apogee, now slowly began its descent to the western horizon. The searing heat continued unabated; it beat down on both sides with torrid impartiality. The knights, sweating under their metal “skins,” no doubt welcomed action as an antidote to sweltering boredom.

In medieval chronicles, battle appears as a series of well-choreographed maneuvers, a kind of *pas de deux* of death in which the major feudal lords strut and dance upon the field of honor. The reality, as seen at Bouvines, was quite different.

Guérin's cavalry attack inaugurated a series of hit-and-run strikes on the Flemings until the hard-pressed northerners were battered and sent reeling. Rival groups of horsemen, French and Flemish, clashed, parted and clashed again, with little thought to tactics or overall strategy. Chain mail afforded only so much protection, and swords and axes were terrifying weapons when wielded in the hands of experts. Men fell to the ground with gaping wounds—it was nothing to see well-muscled arms simply amputated or crushed.

The Flemings fought well, but the French were the superior horsemen. The grate of metal on metal, the clatter of hooves, and the screams of men and horses produced a chaotic cacophony as terrifying as it was bewildering.

Now the focus shifted to the French center, where King Philip Augustus himself became a target of enemy ire. The hard-pressed Count Ferrand on the coalition's left and Count Renaud on its right both pushed into the Gallic center, drawn by the presence of the royal "magnet." It seems that several coalition leaders had sworn to kill the French king, and now they were attempting to redeem their vows.

Count Ferrand's offensive was short-lived, since he still had his hands full with Guérin's cavalry. And French counterattacks soon blunted Renaud's drive. But, then, Emperor Otto and his German infantry of the center surged forward, halberds lowered in a kind of phalanx formation. After wild fighting, the French infantry melted before the Teutonic onslaught, leaving Philip Augustus alone with his household bodyguard.

Though bloody Gallic swords rose and fell with desperate gallantry, the press of Germans could not be denied. Halberd-pikes clawed at the king's armor, seeking a chink to take hold and bring him down. Though no warrior, the king acquitted himself nobly, felling enemy after enemy with wide-swinging arcs of his royal sword. But suddenly a German halberd caught hold between Philip's head and chest, probably where his mail coif joined his hauberk.

In a moment the king was unhorsed, down amid the blood, dust and trampling feet of men and horses. There are slightly differing accounts of what happened next. One tale maintains Galon of Montigny, the king's standard bearer, lowered the blue flag as a sign of distress and cried for help over the terrible din. Luckily for France, some French knights saw what was happening and bounded to their liege's rescue.

The Frenchmen cleared a path to Philip Augustus to protect him from further harm. One account says a resourceful Gaul, one Peter Tristan, had the presence of mind to offer his own horse to the fallen monarch. Philip Augustus managed to remount, but just before the king was in the saddle, another story claims, the valiant Tristan threw himself forward to receive a sword thrust meant for his royal master.

It is wrong to think of Philip Augustus—even Emperor Otto, for that matter—as commanders in the modern, conventional sense. They had no more control of their armies than they did the movements of the ocean. Like the sea, a medieval battle ebbed and flowed to its own natural rhythms. And so it was at Bouvines—hours passed and the fight raged on. It is



Singled out for attention during the Allied counterattack, Philip defended himself with a valor worthy of his late English adversary, King Richard the Lion-Hearted.

said that in places the press of horseflesh and flailing men was so great one could scarcely raise a sword.

With evening fast approaching, the contest was still in doubt, but about now the coalition's left finally began to give way. Pummeled by French attacks all afternoon, the Flemings had reached the end of their tether. Their Count Ferrand was unhorsed and captured; his troops broke and fled.

With the left wing destroyed, Philip Augustus could now focus on the troublesome center. Perhaps scenting victory, French knights galloped toward their Teutonic foes with fresh vigor. The king's household cavalry led the charge, and as they bounded forward it was clear their object was to kill or capture Emperor Otto himself.

The German phalanx that protected Otto did begin to give way, its palisade of halberds hewn down by the steady blows of the French cavalrymen. One French knight, Peter Malvoisen, actually seized the reins of the emperor's horse. Moments later the animal was mortally wounded in the melee. Rearing in a convulsive death throes, it spilled its imperial burden to the ground and wrenched free from the Frenchman's grasp before collapsing.

A German knight, Gerard of Horstmar, gave Otto his own horse, and the emperor was soon remounted, but the danger was not past. Yet another Frenchman, William de Barres, threw an arm around Otto's neck and grappled with him while both were still mounted. The German was unable to break free of Barres's stranglehold, and as the two men wrestled, it seemed the French knight was on the verge of victory.

But success literally slipped from his grasp when a group of German—predominately Saxon—knights rode up and repeat-



Unhorsed and assailed by German and English foot soldiers, King Philip is rescued by French knights. One of them, Peter Tristan, is said to have offered the king his own horse, and then threw himself in the path of an enemy sword meant for Philip.

edly plunged their swords into the Frenchman's horse. As his steel fell dead, the knight was forced to relinquish his hold on his imperial captive. At liberty once again, Otto lost no time in driving his spurs into his mount's flanks and fleeing the field as fast as his lathered animal could take him.

The emperor's precipitous flight was covered by bands of his ever-faithful German knights, but the battle was not yet over. William de Barres—apparently in the saddle again—led a charge that overturned the imperial "chariot" and captured Otto's eagle-dragon standard.

Though victory was nearly in Philip's grasp, the enemy's right under Salisbury and Count Renaud threatened his impending triumph. Salisbury and his core of English troops scored some successes and at one point threatened to encircle the French army and attack from the rear. Luckily for France, though, these islanders were sent packing by a determined Gallic charge, led by the Bishop of Beauvais.

In the long run even the courage of the English troops could not prevent the inevitable. Though for a time the English swept all before them, the Bishop of Beauvais swung around and attacked their rear—the very maneuver they were trying to accomplish against the French army themselves. The Bishop of Beauvais himself joined in the attack; swinging a cudgel with wild abandon, the prelate found Salisbury and clubbed him into submission, no mean feat against a warrior of the Englishman's reputation.

The French rebel Renaud of Boulogne was among the last to yield, but in the end he had to surrender. The Battle of Bouvines was almost ended, with Philip Augustus scoring a complete triumph. There was one last pocket of resistance, some 700 men from Brabant who stubbornly refused to flee or lay down their arms. Since they were without the protection of high pedigree, they were slaughtered to the last man.

It is nearly impossible to determine the casualty figures, and equally impossible to decide how many men the opposing sides had in the first place. The chroniclers of the day had their own statistical axes to grind and inflated the numbers accordingly. The French, it appears, had perhaps 15,000 men, their enemies perhaps 25,000. Of those, the vast majority of both sides were foot soldiers—simple men-at-arms. Philip Augustus probably had around 500 knights with him. As commoners, the foot soldiers commanded little attention for their casualties, but it is recorded at least 170 knights perished on Bouvines field. That they were killed instead of being held for ransom, after the medieval practice, testifies to the intensity of the conflict.

The three coalition leaders captured on the battlefield suffered varying fates. William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, was released after negotiation, but the other two were not so lucky. Count Ferrand found himself lodged in the prison-palace of the Louvre for 13 years. The traitor Renaud died in chains.

Emperor Otto IV's prestige plummeted after his defeat—he was deposed and died in exile not long after. King John of England, too, suffered a decline in fortunes. Had he been victorious over Philip Augustus, John's feudal barons might have swallowed his arbitrary rule, but defeat made it indigestible. A year after Bouvines, the English king was forced to sign the famed Magna Charta, the first real check, however limited, on the "divine right of kings."

Also significant, Bouvines ended the threat to French independence. Victory at a little peasant village enabled Philip Augustus to lay the foundations of modern France. □

California-based writer-teacher Eric Niderost says: "There are far more popular history works in English on King John than about Philip Augustus. Probably the best account available is the scholarly work The Government of Philip Augustus, by John W. Baldwin [University of California Press, Berkeley, Calif.]"

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They Came, They Saw, They Plundered Huns, Vikings and Mongols...all left a destructive legacy.

By Edmund Sheldon

Barbarians! To those who learned their history from the printed page rather than by word of mouth, they were the uncivilized nomads from beyond the horizon. They dwelt north of the German marches, east of the Duchy of Moscow, west of the Great Wall of China—alien, mysterious and menacing.

They subsisted in a cruel, competitive environment and, at various times in history, they would burst out of their faraway lands to invade the more settled societies. When they did, the civilized realms trembled, for their coming promised plunder and rapine at best, conquest and slaughter at worst. When the fury of their onslaught at last abated, they left little behind, save the fearsome memory of their having been there.

Such has been the popular image of the barbarians—Huns, Vikings, Mongols. Terror was their best-remembered legacy, but their martial achievements have not been without a certain fascination. Their influence on military science was nothing to be scoffed at, and their influence was not exclusively disruptive. Indeed, they had important historical impact—the Vikings explored unknown worlds across the western ocean, helped shape the English language and laid the foundation of European Russia. For a quarter of

a millennium, the Mongols established an empire that united China and bridged the cultures of East and West.

Three recent books shed renewed light on the warrior-wanderers and the kingdoms with which they clashed. *The Warrior's Way: England in the Viking Age*, by Stephen Pollington (Blandford Press, London, \$24.95) resurrects the British



"From the fury of the Northmen deliver us, O Lord." In an 11th-century Anglo-Saxon illustration, Vikings attack a keep while slaughtering those caught behind its walls.

Isles of the 10th and early 11th centuries—the largely ignored period between the death of Alfred the Great and the establishment of the Norman Angevins by William the Conqueror. It was a period only marginally dominated by Anglo-Saxon kings who fought and compromised with native Celts, Norse raiders and Danish colonists—a violent, un-

certain age that inspired nostalgic legends of better times in the past under appealing kings named Arthur, Canute and Alfred.

Concentrating on the conflicting cultures of Saxon and Viking—with an epicenter of convenience to that conflict placed around the well-documented Battle of Maldon in 991—author Pollington presents all aspects of both worlds and their impact on one another as England struggled to define itself.

While the seagoing Vikings eventually were assimilated into the culture of Christian, feudal Europe, the landlocked steppes of Central Asia seemed in perpetual ferment, with a bewildering variety of tribal societies vying for dominance.

For those confused and fascinated by that no man's land between East and West, Attila and the Nomad Hordes (Osprey Publishing, London, 1990, \$11.95) may help sort things out. While clarifying the true nature of the Hunnic confederation—more complex and sophisticated than has been depicted by the contemporary Western historians who vilified it—and the equine tactics that made it so formidable, author David Nicolle goes beyond Attila's world to describe the Hsiung-nu, Toba, Turks, Uighurs, Khazars, Khirgiz and numerous other warriors on horseback who

adapted to the varied terrain and climates that lay between Europe and China. Complementing a profuse selection of contemporary illustrations and artifacts are 12 pages of paintings by Angus McBride, whose characteristically dramatic style enlivens the scholarship of the research behind them.

Continued on page 66

INTO THE MOUTH OF HELL



By **DALE GALLON**

On July 3, 1863 at Gettysburg, Garden's Confederate artillery battery sends one gun to support the infantry assault of Pickett's Division, unknowingly advancing them "into the mouth of hell." The right flank of Pickett's Charge has already passed them, and the Union batteries from Little Round Top pour in a fire concentrated on this one lone gun isolated at the apex of a strung-out artillery line. Within ten minutes, Captain Garden and courageous volunteers try once, are turned back by hot iron and pelting lead, then succeed in rescuing the thrice-decimated remnant of his section.

This latest work, "Into the Mouth of Hell," displays Dale Gallon's rare artistic ability in the field of Civil War Art as well, if not better, than any other piece to date. Moving from California a decade ago to live in Gettysburg meant a total commitment to the Civil War. He lives the War, because residing in Gettysburg, on land that felt the footfalls of the warriors, it's around him every day. Living it day-by-day tells: he sees in seemingly insignificant actions of the common combatants the symbolism for a great cause and of the great nation about to emerge.

In "Into the Mouth of Hell," as always his passion for historical accuracy in the smallest detail remains constant. Yet there is something more. From the ethereal quality he has given the sky and background to the lurid reality of a gun section in its death-throes, there is an almost haunting sense about the painting—a feeling of other-worldliness, of one horrific moment about to endure through all time. Few artists today can achieve this rare symbolic dualism—the perfect definition of war.

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that they often welcomed an attack because it stopped the enemy's artillery fire.

In guarding baggage or, perhaps, valuable livestock, the sides of the square were three ranks deep, only the front rank kneeling. Such also was the positioning at Waterloo, but, for resistance to cavalry, four ranks deep normally was called for, the front two ranks kneeling and the third and fourth ranks standing.

On the command "Prepare for Cavalry," the men of the first and second ranks each sank at once upon the right knee, at the same time placing the butt of the musket on the ground against the inside of the right knee, the muzzle slanting upward, with the point of the bayonet at about the height of a horse's nose. The left hand had a firm grip well above the trigger, the right hand held the small of the butt, the left arm resting on the thigh six inches to the rear of the left knee.

The result was a veritable hedgehog of gleaming steel. Certainly, during the fighting, this cohesion inevitably would be lost, but if nothing else, the body positioning served to occupy the minds and attention of the troops awaiting the initial onslaught of the enemy.

Without one invention, the square's strength did not exist—the bayonet, often called a sword (the terms were used interchangeably). At one time, the stabbing end of a musket was a plug type sword tapered to fit into the gun's muzzle, often too loose or too tight—and always preventing the firing of the musket. Better, in time, was the bayonet attachment by means of two rings that encompassed the outer barrel, a design originated by French *Maréchal de Puysegur* in the early 1600s and named after Bayonne, his home city. Later, socket locks and locking springs were added, supposedly at the advice of Field Marshal *Sebastien le Prestre de Vauban*, French King *Louis XIV's* fortification expert. The version bristling at all sides of the British square during the Napoleonic period had finally allowed the soldier to load and fire his musket with bayonet affixed.

Simple arithmetic reveals the firepower that enabled the immovable object to defeat the irresistible force. If the strength of a battalion is taken as 800 men (in the 1800s, the manpower of a battalion varied from 800 to 1,000), each side of the square would, when formed four ranks deep, present a face of about 100 feet across, thus allowing each man a frontage width of two feet. Now, we have 200 men facing the advancing cavalry. In opposition to that, seven feet of frontage was required for each cavalryman because of the great bulk of their horses

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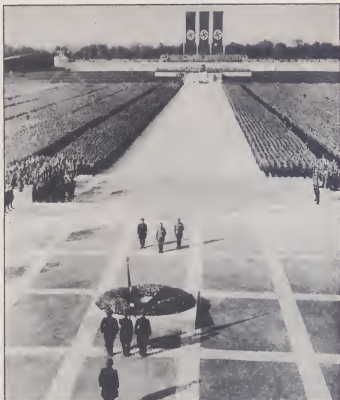
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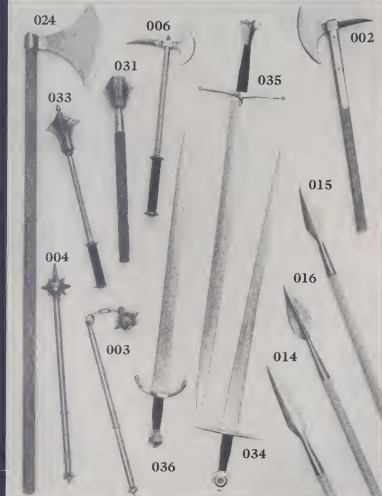
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and the spacing between mounts, and so only 14 horsemen were presented along the same width of front as the men in the square, with a second rank of horsemen charging immediately behind. It was those 28—both cavalry ranks—who would be on the receiving end of the volleys fired from 200 firearms. That means that each cavalryman faced seven muskets. Even with little accuracy, those muskets could take a deadly toll.

The musket of that era was quite a gun; primitive, yes, but formidable. It weighed only 11 pounds, 4 ounces, had a 39-inch barrel and a .75-inch bore that threw a one-ounce ball. It was fairly accurate within 75 yards, but the shot became spent after 200 yards. To hit an object at 200 yards, the shooter had to aim nine feet above it! Nicknamed "Brown Bess" and introduced into the British army in 1682, the same musket (with minor modifications) continued to be Britain's official arm until 1842. It had a naturally brown walnut stock, while the barrel and other metal parts were artificially browned with acid—hence its nickname.

A well-trained man could load and fire two to three shots per minute. Frederick the Great's infantry reached the highest known rate of sustained fire—one shot every 16 seconds, it is said. That the Bess was not all that accurate did not trouble the field generals who placed their emphasis upon controlled mass fire rather than upon marksmanship. Against cavalry, the musket shot was directed against the horse, not the rider. On the debit side, meanwhile, the Brown Bess was guilty of a high proportion of misfires. Also the black powder caused a tangible "fog of war," obscuring the firing area and making targets difficult to see.

Many factors contributed to cavalry's problems in its attempts to crush a strong foe, debouched in well-planned defensive positions. The first third of the distance to the enemy was covered at a trot, then came a canter, and only the last 50 yards was at the gallop. That latter gait made it difficult to maintain the ranks and cohesion; yet, cavalry relies upon close formation to deliver maximum shock at the moment of impact. The conditions of the battlefield, such as ground contour, mud or natural obstacles, often denied the all-out charge so dear to artists and filmmakers.

In addition, the men of the heavy cavalry were weighed down by steel helmets and breastplates made pigeon-breasted to throw off musket balls fired from a distance. None of that body armor could stop a ball fired within close range.

Then, too, there was the animal to consider. With innate intelligence, the horses knew that the shining steel looming ahead was sharp and painful—the animals often swerved to the flanks of

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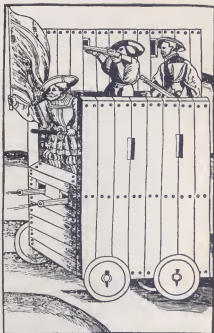
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the square rather than face the bayonets. Even worse, a horse shot down was a stumbling block to those behind, bringing some down outright or causing collisions as others turned in avoidance. Even when frightened or excited, most horses are averse to treading on, or bumping into, a living object. It normally will not gallop against an obstacle that it cannot jump or see a way through.

All these caveats to the cavalry mystique tended to lessen the impact of mounted forces in battle (although that impact still was a major one). At Waterloo, for instance, the French launched 12 major charges. None succeeded.

One of the horseman's chief objectives on a battlefield was to capture the enemy's artillery. The square absolutely defeated that aim in the instances where the guns were deployed at the forefront of the battle lines, with the cannon lining up between squares in a supportive role. As the cavalry invariably split and moved around the square (should it even get that far), the cannoners could feed into the protection of their friends. The horsemen could overrun the guns, perhaps even time after time, but they could do nothing toward capturing or disabling them—the gunners merely returned to their weapons, often being able to fire into the backs of the retreating foe.

When the cavalry charge, breaking from frontal fire, did split right and left, the troopers and their mounts still received musket fire from the sides of the square or from adjoining ones. Even when the surviving cuirassiers pulled up too close to the rear to re-form, they took volleys from the square's rear ranks.

To be sure, the square was not always invincible. At Salamanca, in the Peninsular War, in 1812, England's German Legion broke a French square, but only because of the thrashing of a dying horse that had leaped over the kneeling front rank and struck down a dozen men nearby. This created a gap for the following horsemen. At the Battle of Marignano in 1515, French cavalry "successfully" charged Swiss pikemen—but only after the Swiss square had to stand too long under artillery fire and only after the French had made 35 charges!

Even Kipling, in poetic homage to the "Fuzzy-Wuzzy" or native soldier of the Sudan, tipped his literary hat to the "first-class fighting man" who could break a British square.

Until the time of the American Civil War, when warfare became an affair of rapid movement and entrenchments that bristled with far-hitting rifle fire, the square was the anchor of a defensive army, an immovable bastion against which the irresistible force of the cavalry charge broke asunder again and again. □



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Mary Anna remained in Winchester until early March when Jackson determined that the

Mary Anna would not see her husband again for another thirteen months. Their only child, Julia,

was born in November 1862.

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Deeds Recalled In Stone

Bastogne still remembers America's sacrifices and heroes.

By John J. Ingolsby

BASTOGNE, Belgium—Soon, surprisingly soon, it will be 50 years since the eyes of a war-torn world were riveted upon this obscure Belgian city in the historic Ardennes Forest.

It has been that long, half a century, since "the Battered Bastards of the Bastion of Bastogne" etched their stubborn heroics indelibly in the pages of American military history. They're gone (for the most part), but the once-beleaguered city remains, its history still a visible and tangible force for today's visitors.

It was Bastogne, of course, that became the focal point over the wintry Christmas of 1944 in the huge, wide-ranging battle that hurled tens of thousands of troops against one another; that sent columns of tanks snarling forward; and that covered country-sized square mileage. Other than the Normandy invasion, it was the most dramatic moment of World War II for the American forces in the European Theater. It was here that 76,890 Americans were killed, wounded or left missing after the Germans launched their surprise attack from out of the dense Ardennes in the early morning hours of December 16.

Hitler's "all or nothing" gamble near war's end, it was the Battle of the Bulge—so named because his armies initially created a bulge in the Allied (largely American) front line. It was here—precisely within the snowbound city of Bastogne—that American Brig. Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe, commanding the besieged 101st Airborne and other units, gave his famous reply to German surrender demands: "Nuts."

The lore of the place, recalled almost everywhere the visitor turns, most certainly includes memories of General George S. Patton's role as commander of the U.S. Third Army, which he pulled at moment's notice from battle in the Saar, turned 90 degrees on its axis and sent rolling northward for 100 snow-



Basic tools of Patton's 4th Armored Division, which relieved the besieged town, an M-4 tank and M-10 tank destroyer guard the entrance to the Bastogne Historical Center.

clogged miles to Bastogne's rescue in just two days.

Patton's tanks arrived the day after Christmas, and it was during the forced march that he demanded his famous "weather prayer" from a military chaplain in hopes the skies would clear so that Allied air forces could enter the battle. The skies did clear—the aircraft had nine straight days of good weather—and the tide swung; defeat in the Battle of the Bulge was the beginning of the end for Hitler's Third Reich.

Memories and written accounts have their place, but it is the visible, concrete monuments of Belgium and neighboring Luxembourg that really stir the soul of today's visitor.

The drive to Bastogne through the thick Ardennes Forest, with its rolling hills and spectacularly tall pine trees, sets the stage, especially when it is recalled that the Ardennes was also the site of a legendary World War I battle.

The approach to Bastogne immediately signals what's to come—visitors are greeted by the turret of an American tank with a star emblazoned on its side.

The main street downtown is a bustling storefront area full of clothing shops, small butcher shops featuring famed Belgian ham, and cafés, all full on a Satur-

day afternoon with French-speaking Belgians. A few of the shops feature military clothing, especially the brown leather jackets with fur collars once popularized by General Patton.

Other "distinguishing" features of the city's architecture are the artillery and bullet marks on the facade of almost every building. Downtown Bastogne was not rebuilt, it was simply refurbished.

For the American visitor, two interesting stops are the Café McAuliffe and Le Patton Café, both of which feature newspaper clippings, magazine covers, books and posters of Bastogne's two adopted sons.

In addition, the cafés offer atmosphere, food and drink, and for an American, the opportunity to be the center of attention. The Belgians, most of whom speak fairly good English, often appear delighted that Americans still visit their town on historical treks.

Café McAuliffe is, of course, located in Square McAuliffe in the center of town, where the first U.S. tank to relieve the city sits beside a stone bust of the American officer.

After absorbing the flavor downtown, it was time to venture to the Bastogne Historical Center on the hilly outskirts of the city.

This facility consists of two sections—a Battle of the Bulge museum and a hilltop monument visible from anywhere in the area. Both structures are shaped like a star.

The highlight of the museum is a film of original documentary footage subtitled in four languages (English, German, French and Dutch).

The rest of the museum, completed in May 1976, is filled with battlefield artifacts and items ranging from original tanks, jeeps and weapons to uniforms, maps and more photos. The large room is surrounded with murals depicting wintry scenes from the battle.

The museum is equally divided between American and German memora-

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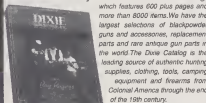
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bilia. It was built with the input of two opposing generals, MacAuliffe and Hasson von Manteuffel, and, now, uniformed mannequins of the two generals are on hand. The Belgians believe it to be the only war museum in the world where the account of the battle is based upon collaboration between opposing leaders.

A short walk from the museum is the star-shaped memorial, about 50 feet high, with the names of the 50 American states listed side by side around the exterior. The circular interior of the star features 10 large stone panels, with the battle story told in prose.

A spiral staircase winds to the top, where an Olympic-style torch awaits and from which the visitor is afforded a breathtaking view of the picturesque Ardennes.

Should the traveler desire more bitter-and-sweet history, then a trip to the American Military Cemetery in nearby Luxembourg City is next. However, about halfway through the one-hour car trip, one should make a stop in Ettelbruck, Luxembourg, at Square Patton. The square features a 12-foot-tall statue of "Old Blood & Guts" in full combat gear, flanked by a Sherman tank and an eagle-topped monument.

Another town in the area is the infamous Malmédy, where 125 defenseless American prisoners were murdered by German SS troops on December 17, the second day of the vast attack.

The military cemetery sits on a hill overlooking Luxembourg City and is similar to Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, DC, only in smaller version. There are approximately 5,000 Americans who fell during the battle buried here on the impeccably landscaped, flower-laden grounds.

At the top of the gently sloping hillside is Patton's own grave—true to form, he had requested that he be buried at the head of his men and facing them. His plot bears a simple white cross like those of his soldiers. (He died in an auto accident in December 1945 while on occupation duty after Nazi Germany's final collapse.)

At the cemetery entrance is a large white mausoleum with a sculpture of Christ. On each side is a sculptured map showing WWII military operations. On the backs of these sculptures are names of Americans killed in the war. Also, a stone set into the ground includes part of the speech made by Dwight Eisenhower at the dedication ceremony.

Thus have the Belgians and Luxembourgers set in stone their gratitude and acknowledgment of American deeds during that terrible time 50 years ago.

But time has not diminished the impact, thanks in large part to long memories in two small countries of Europe. □

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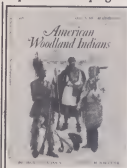
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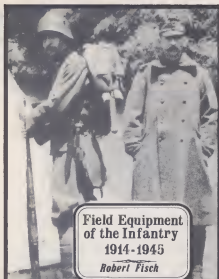
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Continued from page 54

Also by David Nicolle is *The Mongol Warlords* (Firebird Books, Poole, Dorset, 1990, \$24.95), a collection of concise biographies that summarize the lives, times, tactics and campaigns of four of the most feared conquerors of all time. First and foremost, of course, is Genghis Khan, the warrior-statesman who conquered and ravaged a vaster land area than any one man in history and laid the foundations of a remarkably resilient empire. Equally important are two of his grandsons: Kublai Khan, who completed the Mongol conquest and unification of a divided China under his own Yuan Dynasty, and Hulegu, best remembered as the destroyer of Baghdad and a more formidable threat to the Islamic world than the Crusaders ever were.

Last but not least in this quartet selected by Nicolle is Timur-i-Lenk, better known in the West as Tamerlane: a devout Moslem who claimed distant descent from Genghis Khan; an illiterate who reveled in culture and the arts while committing acts of cruelty that managed to surpass even those of his shamanistic Mongol predecessors for arbitrary, cold-blooded sadism.

Profusely illustrated, including 16 color plates by artist Richard Hook, *The Mongol Warlords* provides a useful reference point for which the historian might compare the aspects of medieval warfare in relation to more recent masters of mobile warfare on grand scale.

Battles of the Revolutionary War, 1775-1781, by W.J. Woods, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, N.C., 1990, \$24.95.

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Author W.J. Woods, a retired U.S. Army colonel, does a highly credible job in describing both American and British troops from aspects such as training and command, through armaments and methods of supply. Given their resources, the colonial officers did a remarkable job in trading blows with the well-disciplined and experienced British regulars and German mercenaries.

The Battle of Bunker Hill (actually Breed's Hill) was not merely the commonly depicted combat of ranks of British soldiers storming entrenched rebels

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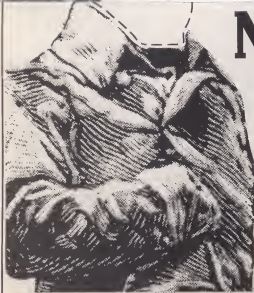
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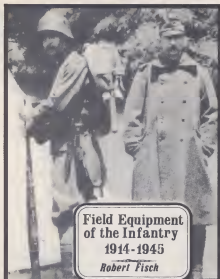
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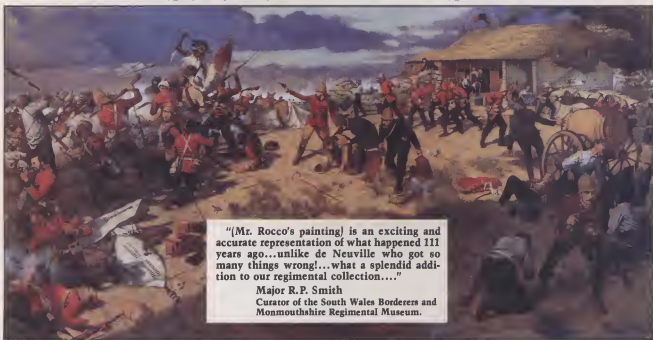
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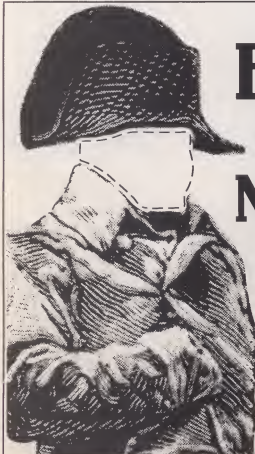
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at the top. American officers William Prescott and John Stark had indeed constructed redoubts at the crest of the hill, but they had also extended the American lines to their left, through a meadow and culminating in a rapidly built breastwork on the Mystic River beach. The British, under Sir William Howe, attempted to flank Breed's Hill, but were repulsed along the extended line.

Unable to turn the flank, Howe then was content to maintain a pressure on the left while his main body of troops finally captured the height after three costly attacks. Most American casualties, Wood points out, were incurred not at the furious battle at the summit, but rather as the colonials fled the British on the reverse slope.

While the author details numerous American victories, he also pays attention to colonial blunders. General George Washington displayed remarkable strategic and tactical acumen at the battles of Trenton and Princeton, yet at Brandywine he failed to heed intelligence reports and was outflanked and defeated.

Considerable credit is given to American leadership in general. Many officers were able to effectively work within the limitations of their inexperienced forces, especially a militia that could deliver firepower but could not be expected to hold fast against concentrated British attacks. An excellent example is the Battle of Cowpens, in which Dan Morgan got his "two rounds" worth from his militiamen before allowing them to retreat and let his battle-hardened Continentals take over. When Nathaniel Greene attempted to use similar tactics at Guilford Courthouse, he was less successful since the terrain was not as favorable for such a maneuver as at Cowpens.

Personal courage, of course, was a hallmark on both sides. Benedict Arnold displayed dash and daring both at the siege of Quebec and at Bemis Heights near Saratoga. British Major Patrick Ferguson was killed as he personally led his Loyalists in a breakout from the trap sprung by American "over-the-mountain" boys at the Battle of King's Mountain—a momentous fight in which no regular soldiers were employed.

The text in *Battles of the Revolutionary War* is nicely complemented by a series of helpful maps depicting the major engagements from Bunker Hill to the naval battle of the Chesapeake Capes between French and British fleets in 1781. The volume, a new addition to the "Major Battles and Campaigns" series edited by John S.D. Eisenhower, offers a lively pace and lucid writing style that will appeal to the amateur and professional historian alike.

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ESPIONAGE

Continued from page 8

Disgusted, Henry Lewis received a surprise visit from Captain George N. Hollins of the Confederate Navy. With the captain was a slightly built young man introduced as Richard Thomas. Hollins and Thomas informed Lewis that they were on their way to Baltimore, where they would board the *St. Nicholas* with the intention of seizing the steamer and delivering it to him.

Hollins, 61, a native of Baltimore, was tall, white-haired and distinguished-looking. He had begun his naval career as a midshipman in the War of 1812, learning his trade under the watchful eye of the renowned Stephen Decatur. More recently, he had cast his lot with the Confederate Navy.

Richard Thomas, meanwhile, was a cultured, highly intelligent gentleman from St. Mary's County, Maryland. His family was prominent and his father had been a state legislator of note. Thomas was anxious to strike a blow that would demonstrate Maryland's "true allegiance" was to the South. He had briefly delayed offering his services to the Confederacy in order to care for his ailing mother. Indeed, Thomas' own health was not the best; he looked rather frail. Nevertheless, the young man had already packed more adventure into his 27 years than most men ever see in their entire lives. In 1850 he went to West Point, where his classmates included Jeb Stuart and Robert E. Lee's son Custis. Thomas had resigned, however, and gone to California as part of a government surveying party. Seeking greater excitement, the young Marylander had moved on to China to help suppress piracy in Asian waters. He next turned up serving with Garibaldi's legion in Italy, where he called himself Richard Thomas Zarvona. No stranger to combat, he bore a faint scar across his cheek as an unmistakable badge of courage.

Hollins and Thomas may have thought of using the *St. Nicholas* to capture the *Pawnee* before they even knew of Henry Lewis' plan—Hollins later claimed that the idea had begun with him. And long after the war, former Virginia Governor John Letcher gave the credit to Thomas. While Lewis had been getting nowhere with Holmes and Secretary Walker, Hollins had approached Governor Letcher, who approved the idea and gave Hollins a draft for \$1,000 to finance the seizure of the *St. Nicholas*. Letcher introduced the captain to Richard Thomas, the man who would go behind the lines to purchase the weapons necessary to carry out the plan. And now the reluctant General Holmes was

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ordered to cooperate, which he did after first putting his objections in writing. "It seems to me," commented Holmes, "that success would be miraculous."

Captain Hollins, his two sons and Thomas were smuggled back across the Potomac by open boat. Hollins signed Governor Letcher's draft and dispatched Thomas to Baltimore by steamer to purchase weapons and recruit as many trustworthy men as he could. Hollins and his sons then went to the home of a friend in St. Mary's County and remained until sundown. Hollins, his sons and five other men set off after dark by wagon for Point Lookout, Md., where the St. Nicholas would stop on her way to Washington. A pouring rain made it "a nasty, dirty night."

And so it was that the steamer St. Nicholas left Baltimore on schedule at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, June 28, 1861.

One of her passengers attracted perhaps a bit more attention than others, a lively little "Madame La Force." Fluent French had burst from the worried lady's lips as she paced the deck until she was certain her large millinery trunks had been placed safely aboard. Then the lady had become as charming as only a Frenchwoman could be. Madame La Force was soon observed in the company of a huge Union army officer, talking animatedly and fluttering her fan. The lady's face was veiled, but her general appearance warranted admiration. The fortunate officer became an object of envy among the other male passengers.

On through the night sped the St. Nicholas, her powerful engines throbbing steadily. The sidewheeler reached Point Lookout shortly before midnight. A number of other passengers came aboard, including a dignified elderly gentleman. Madame La Force had begun to yawn demurely. The lady was weary, she explained, and must retire. She spoke briefly to the elderly gentleman before leaving for her cabin.

The moment had arrived. As soon as the steamer left the wharf, the conspirators proceeded to the French "lady's" luggage and removed the weapons concealed in the trunks. The stateroom doors flew open, and in strode "Madame La Force," wide awake and amazingly transformed into the dashing young Richard Thomas. Thomas now was dressed in the resplendent uniform of a colonel of the Maryland Zouaves, complete with cutlass and pistol.

The elderly gentleman, of course, was none other than Captain George Hollins, and many of the other passengers revealed themselves to be Confederate personnel. The Southerners took charge of the St. Nicholas before the startled crew could resist.



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The crew of the *St. Nicholas* was placed under guard in the hold and the ship's lights were doused. Hollins ordered the captured vessel to the Coan River to keep his rendezvous with Henry Lewis and Colonel Bate's infantry.

The *St. Nicholas* arrived without incident at Coan River Landing at 3:30 a.m.—Lewis would be there in another hour with more navy officers, the Tennessee soldiers, and 15 sailors from a Confederate gunboat. To pass the time, Hollins busied himself by reading through the Baltimore newspapers. One item seemed to leap at him from the page. It was an account of the death of Captain James Harman Ward, commander of the Union Potomac flotilla. Ward had been mortally wounded aboard the *USS Freeborn* while providing support for a Union landing attempt at Matthias Point, Va. Virtually the entire Potomac flotilla, including the *Pawnee*, had been ordered to Washington to allow the crewmen to attend Ward's funeral. After coming so close to success, the attempt to capture the *Pawnee* had been halted by the combat death of an enemy officer!

Since the *St. Nicholas* soon would be missed, she must sail back down the Potomac to the Chesapeake Bay and then proceed to the safety of Fredericksburg, up the Rappahannock River.

The daring Confederate attempt was by no means a total failure, however. The Confederates were able to take three more prizes. As the *St. Nicholas* rounded Smith's Point and entered the Chesapeake Bay, Hollins spotted a schooner flying the Stars and Stripes and heading down the bay. Hollins ignored her for the moment, his attention drawn to two other ships which were sailing in the opposite direction. The *St. Nicholas* quickly overhauled the first of these, the brig *Monticella*, bound for Baltimore with 3,500 bags of coffee from Rio de Janeiro. Mail sacks found on the brig proved to contain dispatches from the Union navy squadron off South America.

Less than an hour was required to overtake the second vessel, the schooner *Mar Pierce*, bound for Washington from Boston with 260 tons of New England ice. Prize crews sailed both captured vessels to Fredericksburg.

Hollins now turned his attention to the first schooner he had sighted. She proved to be the *Margaret*, sailing from Union-occupied Alexandria to New York City with 270 tons of coal. This prize was most fortunate, for by now Hollins "was on my last bucket of coal." The *Margaret* was taken in tow, and the *St. Nicholas* herself headed for Fredericksburg.

George Hollins and Richard Thomas became the heroes of the day in the Southern press. Even the *Beacon* of St.



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Mary's, Md., dared to speak favorably of the conduct of the Confederates. "Throughout the whole night not a single act of rudeness was perpetrated, all the passengers being treated with the greatest civility," read the *Beacon*. "The ladies were told by the commander that they were in the hands of Southern gentlemen, and would be treated as his own sisters. Whatever opinions may be entertained of the capture itself, no one who was present on that eventful night can say aught but in praise of the gentlemanly deportment of all concerned." In fact, the women passengers seemed quite taken with Richard Thomas, the French Lady. The delighted women actually occupied their time by remaking a large Union flag into a number of smaller Confederate banners, which they presented to their gallant captors.

Governor Letcher commissioned Thomas a colonel in the Virginia militia and gave him authority to recruit a regiment to be known as the Potomac Zouaves. Thomas requested his commission be made out as Richard Thomas Zarvona, the name he had used under Garibaldi. Thomas' unofficial Maryland Zouaves were absorbed into the new unit.

The three ships taken by Captain Hollins in the Chesapeake proved quite welcome in Richmond, already feeling the pinch of Union blockade, but at this early stage of the war, sentiment still played an important part. The *Monticello* was Baltimore-owned and the Virginians refused to consider Marylanders as their enemies. The ship was returned to her captain. The ship's cargo of Brazilian coffee was retained, but the owners were paid the going price on the Baltimore market. Since coffee brought considerably more in Richmond, this still made the transaction profitable—much of the coffee eventually went to the Confederate Army.

The *Mary Pierce* and the *Margaret* were both Northern ships. They were condemned by a prize court and sold. The cargo of ice on the *Mary Pierce*, which had been intended for the tables of wealthy Washington residents, brought \$8,000 at a sale and instead went to ease the sufferings of sick and wounded Confederate soldiers.

The steamer *St. Nicholas* was purchased by the Confederate government and converted into a gunboat. The ship was later burned to prevent her capture when Fredericksburg was abandoned to the Union forces in April 1862.

George Hollins and Henry Lewis would serve the South throughout the remaining years of the fraternal war. However, a different fate awaited Richard Thomas. The restless young man could not forget the ease with which the *St. Nicholas* had been taken. He was determined to make another capture.

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Against the advice of his friends and
admirers, Thomas returned to Maryland
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authorities were expecting a second at-
tempt and kept a close watch on the Bal-
timore packets. They boarded ships to
inspect them, and the *Paumotu* was posi-
tioned to prevent any Confederate-held
vessel from reaching the Coan River.

On July 4, 1861, several suspicious
persons were seen inquiring about the
Baltimore packet *Columbia*, owned by
the same line as the *St. Nicholas*. Small
groups of men had also been reported
leaving Baltimore, possibly to join
Richard Thomas, who was known to
have arrived at Fair Haven in Anne
Arundel County. On July 8, Thomas
tried to return to Baltimore on the *Mary
Washington*. He should have known bet-
ter. The French Lady was recognized,
and Lieutenant Thomas H. Carmichael,
who was aboard the steamer, ordered
the ship's captain to embark his pas-
sengers at Fort McHenry. Finding the
ship was heading for Fort McHenry in-
stead of the regular landing, Thomas ap-
proached Lieutenant Carmichael and
asked by what authority he had made
the change. Carmichael replied that he
acted under the authority of the provost
marshal of Baltimore. Thomas then drew
his revolver and called his men to his
assistance, threatening to throw Car-
michael and his companion overboard.
The two Union officers drew their own
pistols and dared the Southerners to try
it. Women passengers ran screaming from
the cabin, while a few male passengers
gave their support to Carmichael. By
now the *Mary Washington* had pulled up
to the wharf at Fort McHenry. Car-
michael ran ashore and informed General
Nathaniel P. Banks that the notorious
French Lady was aboard.

Despite the odds, Richard Thomas
made one more attempt to evade capture.
General Banks ordered a company of In-
fantry to board the *Mary Washington*, and
soon all of the accused had been arrest-
ed except Thomas. After an hour and a
half of searching, Thomas was finally lo-
cated. He had concealed himself in a bu-
reau drawer.

Although Thomas' army commission
had been found on him, the French
Lady was not to be regarded as a prisoner
of war. For the next two years Thomas
would undergo what can only be de-
scribed as cruel and unusual punish-
ment. Most of his imprisonment was
spent in solitary confinement. South-
ern requests for his exchange would
go unanswered. By the time he was fi-
nally released in 1863, his health had
been broken. Richard Thomas retired to
France and took no further part in the
war. The colorful French Lady passed
into history. □

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Against the advice of his friends and
admirers, Thomas returned to Maryland
at the beginning of July. The Union
authorities were expecting a second at
tempt and kept a close watch on the Bal
timore packets. They boarded ships to
inspect them, and the *Pawnee* was posi
tioned to prevent any Confederate-held
vessel from reaching the Coan River.

On July 4, 1861, several suspicious
persons were seen inquiring about the
Baltimore packet *Columbia*, owned by
the same line as the *St. Nicholas*. Small
groups of men had also been reported
leaving Baltimore, possibly to join
Richard Thomas, who was known to
have arrived at Fair Haven in Anne
Arundel County. On July 8, Thomas
tried to return to Baltimore on the *Mary
Washington*. He should have known bet
ter. The French Lady was recognized,
and Lieutenant Thomas H. Carmichael,
who was aboard the steamer, ordered
the ship's captain to embark his pas
sengers at Fort McHenry. Finding the

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cated, he had concealed himself in a bu
rrow drawer.

Although Thomas' army commission
had been found on him, the French
Lady was not to be regarded as a prisoner
of war. For the next two years Thomas
would undergo what can only be de
scribed as cruel and unusual punish
ment. Most of his imprisonment was
spent in solitary confinement. South
ern requests for his exchange would
go unanswered. By the time he was fi
nally released in 1863, his health had
been broken. Richard Thomas retired to
France and took no further part in the
war. The colorful French Lady passed
into history. □

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For over four hours they keep up a steady fire against the Union assaults below them, and in turn, receive devastating counter-battery fire from heavier Union guns across

the river. Finally, after withstanding tremendous losses, it is only the lack of ammunition which compels them to call on E. P. Alexander's Artillery to relieve them. Reluctantly, they relinquish what their commander called dubiously, the "post of honor." Others, perhaps more realistically, called it "the slaughter pen."

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